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The clans are of basic importance. They are the largest units of solidarity, and open conflict never occurs within them, as it would not between a man's clan and his wife's and mother's clan. It is through his clan that a man establishes his totemic relations and identifies himself with the sacred world by virtue of a mystical experience of his father. The mother is supposed to be spiritually fertilized by the entrance into her uterus of the infant's soul when it has come from the child's father's totemic well. Many ethnologists have insisted that the Australian aborigines have no knowledge of physiological conception. Although I held this opinion during the first part of my field work, I later came to the conclusion that knowledge of procreation is general to the Murngin but is considered of little importance.[4]

The blood feud is forever present and tends to kill a sufficient number of young men to allow the system of polygyny[5] to function. The Murngin have developed a number of well-constructed types of warfare which form dramatic episodes in the several chains of feuds linking the dead generations of the past to those of the living.

The moiety[5] is a still larger unit than the clan, dividing the sixty-odd clans into two groups which intermarry. By the device of the moiety, the whole of the life of the Murngin, as well as nature, is placed in two opposing groups called Yiritja and Dua.

A final important structure in Murngin society is the age-grading[5] institution. It divides, first, the men from the women (see page 131, Age Grading) on the basis of those who are initiated into the mysteries and those who are not, and then redivides the men on an age-graded scale based primarily on the place a man achieves within the rest of his social organization through *rites de passage*.

Within this social configuration the life of each Murngin male goes through an exact cycle. The first life crisis occurs when the Murngin soul, through the father's mystic experience, leaves the totemic well and enters the womb of the mother. By circumcision around the age of six to eight years the individual passes from the social status of a woman to that of a man. When at about the age of eighteen he achieves parenthood and is shown his totems for the first time, he goes to another, higher status; and to a still higher when, at about thirty-five, he sees the high totems. At death he passes through a very elaborate mortuary rite, returns to his totemic well, and the circle is complete. The personality before birth is purely spiritual; it becomes almost completely profane or unspiritual in the earlier period of its

[4] See pages 23-25.
[5] See Glossary of Technical Terms.

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himself against her leg, broke the line, and went back into the deep water. We did not see him again. I came across to her; I said, "What was that?" She said, "A bream fish." I said, "What did he do?" She told me. She said, "My father went fishing like this when my little brother was born; I think this fish shook against my leg for that.' I said, "Oh you know that." "Yes." "You remember my dream I told you about?" She said, "Yes, that's what I think. I won't menstruate any longer now because that baby fish is inside me."

A man from another clan told me this story:

My brothers and I took a dugout canoe and went fishing. We went a long way that day. It was dark when we came back. When we passed the long sand beach on Rabuma Island a turtle came out of the sea and looked at me. I heard him splash the water. It was dark and I was afraid. I said, "What's that?" I heard nothing then. We went on. We paddled slowly, for it was very late, and we were very tired. I heard something go "Wah!" I said, "What is that one?"—That turtle looked at me. All the men heard me call out.—We went on. The tide came in. The moon was still up. The Big Star came out. No light yet. We paddled slowly. Pretty soon that fellow came out again. He looked at me. It was light now, the birds had started to sing.—We were home. I left my canoe and went to my camp. This one followed me [the informant pointed to his third and last child, a small girl]. She had been in the canoe all the time, but I didn't know her.

I went to sleep. I dreamed she came to me. I went to the mainland next day. Wilkdjungo's mother saw my younger wife. A child had been sucking her breast. It had left a wet spot on the nipple. The old woman said, "That one will have a child soon."

I came home and quarreled with this wife. My other wife said, "Don't fight with her. She is going to have a baby." I stopped scolding. She was too young to know that a baby was inside her when I came from where the turtle had followed me and this baby had come home with me from that narra well.

If the child should die as a baby it would go back to the well, stay awhile and then return to the same mother. Narnarngo's wife's baby died. The baby went back to its waterhole to become a fish again for a little while and stay beside its wongar.

Narnarngo walked by his water hole. He had just killed a dugong. When he slept that night he dreamed that the child's marikmo (father's father) came to him and said, "I'm bringing my maraitcha [son's son] back to you." Soon the child was born. Everyone knew

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that it was the same baby because of the child's resemblance to the one that had died, which proved that the father's dream was true.

In 1898 Spencer and Gillen published their book, *Native Tribes of Central Australia*, in which they declare, "We have amongst the Arunta, Luritcha and Ilparra tribes, and probably also among others, such as the Warramunga, the idea firmly held that the child is not the direct result of intercourse, that it may come without this, which merely, as it were, prepares the mother for the reception and birth also of an already formed spirit child who inhabits one of the local totem centers. Time after time we have questioned them on this point and always received the reply that the child was not the direct result of intercourse." This is in reference to the opinion that among the natives of central and northern Australia there is no knowledge of physiological conception and that they believe impregnation of a woman to be entirely due to spiritual causes. Spencer and Gillen rather insisted on this fact because many of the whites of Australia believe that the natives practice the rite of subincision in the attempt to prevent conception. This operation is found throughout a large part of Australia; Spencer and Gillen rightly point out that it has nothing to do with birth control practices.

I was in very intimate contact with the Murngin natives. During my first eight or nine months among them I was firmly convinced that the people had no understanding of physiological conception and believed in the spiritual impregnation of a woman by a totemic child spirit. All the fathers told me their children had come to them in dreams as totemic souls, or in some extra-mundane experience, and asked that their mothers be pointed out to them. The men had complied with the request of the children, who had entered the vaginas of the mothers. During all this time, although I was in constant relationship with a large number of the men and there was practically no taboo on our conversations, which were of the most intimate nature, I could find no indication of any knowledge whatsoever of physiological conception; yet in the study I was making of the people, while looking at the problem from the point of view of the "total situation," that is, considering the whole of the culture, there were strong indications that the natives understood the true nature of the father's physical function.

The second time I entered the area I determined to go into this matter further, since the people I studied were but an extension of the central tribes on which Spencer and Gillen had reported. An occasion

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arose in which I could inquire directly of certain old men just what the semen did when it entered the uterus of a woman. They all looked at me with much contempt for my ignorance and informed me that "that was what made babies." I had not been able to obtain this information earlier because the ordinary savage is far more interested in the child's spiritual conception, which determines its place in the social life of the people, than he is in the physiological mechanism of conception. He would far rather talk about ritual and myth than about ordinary mundane affairs. The relationship between the primitive men of northeastern Arnhem Land and me as a field worker would be the same as that between the colonial Puritans of Massachusetts and the traditional visitor from Mars. Had the latter asked Cotton Mather or any other member of the community "where babies came from," he would have discovered that they came from heaven, that God sent them, and that it was the special duty of the church to look out for them. He might have been told that the stork brought them, and discovered totemic "spiritual conception." He would have been told this for approximately the same reason that the ordinary anthropological field investigator is informed by the natives that the totemic spirit is what causes impregnation.

I know it is dangerous to assume that, because the tribes I studied knew about physiological conception, the people Spencer and Gillen investigated had similar knowledge. I do feel, though, the necessity of throwing doubt upon the validity of the conclusions reached by Spencer and Gillen and others who claim there is no knowledge of physiological conception among certain savage tribes. I think that possibly this knowledge does exist but is not considered important, the spiritual conception of the child looming so large in native thinking that the field worker obtains nothing but facts concerning the latter.[11]

When a man dies he goes straight to his narra well. He is taken there by his marikmo (paternal grandfather). He never comes back but always remains a spirit. Usually a Murngin who is about to die, particularly if severely wounded in a spear fight, dances his death dance, which is symbolical of the ceremonial actions of his totem. This is to send his spirit back to his ranga well.

"We can drink that narra water; we can see the bottom of the well.

[11] This point perhaps has been labored by me, but a large number of sociological and anthropological theories have been built out of the idea that there are many savage peoples who are ignorant of the facts of procreation. It is time some check be placed upon such speculation until further proof is accumulated by field workers.

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That is nothing. That man is far down below in the deep water with his ranga, with his wongar and his old marikmo." 775

The soul of the dead (bir-im-bir) then returns to its totem and the totem lives in the sacred narra well. This is true for both men and women.

A Warumeri clansman was unconscious and near death. The relatives sang the garma sea-way (a cycle of songs about the sea and those totems which are connected with it). While they sang, it was thought, the spirit of marikmo was listening to the song. They then sang crayfish, which is a Warumeri totem. The hand of the dying one moved convulsively like a crayfish. They sang whale, also the clan's totem, and the person dying kicked in imitation of a whale. This meant he was going to die, and he was telling his people. He wanted them to sing his song, it was believed, so that his marikmo and old gatu (father's father's father) would know and come to him. 763 533

The dying one stiffened and was quiet. He was dead according to tribal thought, although his heart beat. "I see that go," one relative said about the heart of the dying man, "and I knew he was dead, but that his marikmo was looking out for him. I could see that because that old man marikmo moved inside his heart. He was taking that spirit back to the Warumeri well." 763

After death and before the burial ceremony, the symbol of the narra well of the deceased is painted on his chest and abdomen—in this instance, the wild duck well. This is done in order that all the dead of the well can see the one who has just died and take him immediately away to his water hole. 764

When, during the Djungguan ceremony for the great snake, Yurlunggur, and during the Narra ceremony for the other totemic emblems, a ranga is made, not only does the totem or the totem's essence enter into it through the singing of the men, but also the birimbir spirits of the dead ancestors—illustrating the close association of the clan members with their totems and dead ancestors. 776 778

The mythological ancestors who are in the well and who had some part in its formation are called old marikmo or old gatu. Their names express clearly the affiliation of the mythical men to the narra well and to the totem.

The names of the wells, as will be seen by examining the list of those belonging to the clans, pages 39-51, show the same totemic affiliation either directly or indirectly. Like the names of the mythological ancestors, they are of two types, the sacred and the camp variety. 778 103

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The marikmo-maraitcha reciprocation is far less powerful than the wawa-yukiyuko or bapa-gatu relationship. The female marikmo is seldom considered at all. A marikmo diramo is of more importance to a maraitcha diramo after death than before. It is largely because of this post-mortem relationship that the living tie is of importance.

A spirit child comes from the water hole of the clan where the spirit of the dead marikmo is. This marikmo takes a special interest in the unborn child. A maraitcha receives some of his names, including all his totemic names, from his marikmo diramo. A maraitcha mielk receives her names from her female marikmo and mari.

When a man dies, the spirit of his marikmo comes out of the well for him, and takes the dead man's good soul[10] back to the well whence it had come as a spirit child. When a man lies dying, the spirit of marikmo (also mari) comes to his maraitcha and calls for the spirit to come out and join him. The natives believe that sometimes just as the man dies, while the heart is still beating, the marikmo's spirit enters the heart, and that is why the heart continues to beat. He then takes the soul of the dead man out of the heart and leaves for the other world through the dead man's mouth. Frequently, the spirit of a dead marikmo fights with the mokoi (the evil ghosts who live in jungles) for the spirit of the dead man, for they claim it as theirs. The father and others paint the body of the dead man or woman with the design of the totemic water hole and sing a totemic song so that marikmo can hear and lead his maraitcha to the totemic well and save it from the attacks of the mokoi.

When the bones are exhumed the women carry them for a time. A marikmo mielk helps in this, but her participation is small and of little importance.

A marikmo diramo has a claim on a man's canoe. Both male and female marikmo seem to acquire what powers they have because they are in the patrilineal line and are pale reflections of the father.

Mokul Bapa ⟷ *Gatu* (diramo and mielk) (father's sister ⟷ brother's child)

The varieties of mokul bapa correspond to those of bapa. The mokul bapa, say the natives, is a kind of female father. No taboos surround her relations with gatu except the ordinary restrictions between men and women of the same moiety. Gatu diramo looks upon her not only as a sister to his father, but also as a mother of his dué, a most important person.

[10] Birimbir, warrot; see Glossary of Native Terms.

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one of them.' The two old ones say, 'Your first man is dead already.'" [Dorng's brother died and he got Opossum through the levirate.] His old wives were very pleasant and kind to him, but Opossum was a scold. "When I want to sleep with one of the old sisters at night," he said, "Opossum won't go to sleep as she should. I wait and wait; sometimes morning comes, and that woman watches and won't go to sleep. All right, I wait no longer. I play with her. When I do, Opossum growls at me. The old sisters go to sleep, but sometimes they laugh at me when I play with Opossum."

When Mahkarolla's gawel and mokul gave him their second daughter, the first daughter, who was his wife, immediately quarreled with her younger sister and asked her what right she had to be sleeping with Mahkarolla, who belonged only to her. The first wife said nothing to the husband about her opposition to her sister. When her parents heard of it they said to their older daughter, "She is just the same as you. You are our daughter and she is our daughter. You have him for a husband, and we have given her to him, and now she has him for a husband. She is your young sister; you'll now have someone to look out for the wood for you, and she can help you gather food." This stopped all criticism, and the two sisters lived together as wives to Mahkarolla with the utmost amiability and friendship.

This is the usual situation in Murngin marriage when two sisters from one family marry a man. The older sister has more power than the younger one. Trouble between wives is only likely when he marries into two clans distant from each other.

A wife has considerable independence. She is not the badly treated woman of the older Australian ethnologists' theories. She usually asserts her rights. Women are more vocal than men in Murngin society. Frequently they discipline their husbands by refusing to give them food when the men have been away too long and the wives fear they have had a secret affair.

Husbands and wives are strongly united through their children, for both are very fond of their offspring and extremely demonstrative in their affection. To a European, the children are almost intolerable in their demands on their parents and those around them.

As an indication of connubial solidarity, the following is presented. A small child had died and been buried. A day or two after this a camp fight developed only a short distance from the child's grave. The voices of the mother and father could be heard above the din, first pleading with the combatants to stop, and then angrily cursing

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the people engaged in the trouble because it is believed a spirit of the dead should not be disturbed by fights until after the last mourning ceremony. It was as father and mother that the two protested, but evidently through the child there was a greater bond of solidarity between them.

When a young dué is circumcised, his near galle cut their thighs "to show their sorrow." A galle always carries her dué's bones after they have been exhumed.

Dué Diramo ⟷ *Galle Diramo* (father's sister's son ⟷ mother's brother's son)

There are as many variations in the dué-diramo and galle-diramo relationship as in the dué-diramo and galle-mielk type.

This is one of the strongest relationships between men. The actual brothers of ego's wife (who is the daughter of mother's brother) and the consanguine father's sister's son (who is the husband of ego's sister) have the strongest bond of any of the male dué and galle. Each always comes to the other for assistance when he gets into trouble. When a man is giving presents to gawel for gawel's daughter, he also offers them to galle diramo because he is brother to the wife.

When Narnarngo got himself into trouble with Bengaliwe his dué immediately came to his assistance (see page 86). This is only one instance of scores recorded by the writer.

Dué and galle engage in many enterprises together, such as canoe building. The bond between them finds a full expression in all the everyday activities of life. When a man is in trouble and needs a good supply of weapons it is always his brothers, and his dué and galle, who lend him extra spears and clubs, and who come to his assistance.

Male dué and galle have added strength given to their relationship through indirect ties; dué's son and galle's daughter will later be husband and wife; and galle will later be, or is, gawel to dué's son, just as dué is waku to galle's father. This last relationship is one of the most binding in Murngin society, and by indirect relationship it occurs twice in the reciprocity that exists between galle and dué: dué's son is waku to galle, and dué is waku to galle's father.

The full position of dué diramo and galle diramo cannot be realized until one studies the behavior of yeppa and her brother and her position as the wife of dué. The dué's position therefore includes the following relationships: (1) to his wife; (2) to galle's father; and (3) his son's relationship of waku to dué's galle. Every one of these elements

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602 553 shall be given, which means that the father chooses the names from his marelker.

602 Kutara and mari always come to each other's assistance in times of danger. When a camp quarrel is being aired kutara invariably stands at mari's side. If one of them is killed the other will aid the avenging party. A black magician's tales of his killings speak of a mari who had lost his kutara in a spear fight and had come to the magician [154] for aid to buy back his kutara's life. The sorcerer slew the kutara's killer by magic, and the mari paid for it with many handsome gifts.

[431] Presents are always being exchanged between kutara and mari. When ranga string is being given away after some of the big ceremonies, mari and kutara are always prominent in the exchanges.

● 715 When kutara dies mari's spirit always comes for him, along with marikmo's. If the deceased was a young man, the dead mari's spirit condemns his relatives for not giving the child better treatment and for not preventing his death. They always explain to his mari's spirit that they have done all they could to keep him alive. Mari helps marikmo's spirit take the dead soul back to its totemic water hole and helps protect it against the evil ghosts who try to steal kutara's soul. So, in death as in life, mari is kutara's protector and guide. In [852] the Djungguan circumcision ceremony mari's totemic name is always called out by his kutara, as is marikmo's, and it is believed that the spirit of mari appears at that time, although it is not seen.

602 [867] Mari is usually the person who really teaches kutara his manners. Mari is powerful not only because of his direct relationship with kutara, but also indirectly, for he is father of mokul (mother-in-law) and marelker (mokul's brother); he is marelker to kutara's bapa, and wawa or yukiyuko to mari mielk, who is mother to kutara's gawel.

602 606 The fact that mari is father to kutara's mokul, the woman with the strongest taboos around her and one who is very important to kutara, gives kutara a strength he would not otherwise possess. He can force mokul to give her daughter to him if the mokul is unfair about it, since mari can put pressure not only on her but on her husband, who is gawel to kutara. Mari occupies, because of this relationship with kutara's gawel and mokul, one of the most powerful positions. A man's whole position, security and well-being demand that he have a number of wives and children; he must look to gawel and mokul for the fruition of his wishes; if his mari and he are on good terms, which nearly always holds true, his mari will force these two to help him. In other words, the relatives with whom ego is weakest are those with

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consummation of his family of procreation through his first child's "birth" effects the father's spiritual birth into a recognized higher status in the community age grouping, and simultaneously the new being is taken into the lowest age grade.

As an old man, the Murngin learns the final mysteries of life by seeing the most esoteric of the totems. Ultimately he dies and assumes a new social status, and by the mourning rite of passage enters his last social grouping, for he still retains a social personality of his own as long as he is in the memory of his group. His ultimate fate is loss of social personality when he is forgotten as an individual and remembered only as an undifferentiated part of a long line of clan ancestors and is absorbed in the general sacredness of the clan well. The sacred power of the clan well derives in part from the knowledge of the souls of the long and the recent dead dwelling within it. The dead soul, when it is ceremonially ushered into the totemic well, is a spiritual part of the man's or woman's participation in the land of the living. The woman's spiritual existence, although not primary and direct as thought of by the Murngin, is nevertheless real and identifiable, for she has a number of sacred totemic names known to her father and brothers, she comes from the totemic water hole as a fish, and vicariously, and to some extent directly, participates in all the sacred totemic rituals. Her partial participation in these rituals which are enacted outside the men's ground also gives her a certain amount of ritualization.

As a man becomes more deeply integrated into his daily community life, that is, when he becomes old enough to go on expeditions as a responsible member of the blood feud and to be held accountable by the enemies of the clan as a part of his group, and when he marries and has children and extends his kinship personality by primary contacts, he at the same time grows deeper and deeper into his esoteric existence and becomes more deeply learned in the rituals and the sacred language.

A review of the chapter on economics and technology quickly convinces one that men make and use the greater number of the more complex tools, weapons, and implements. If all the complexities of the technological apparatus as a part of the society's adaptation to its natural environment were charted, each process receiving a line symbolizing its part in the general technical behavior, it would become apparent that the greater the complexity of the technology, the greater the participation of the men in it, and the simpler the technological processes, the more women participate. There is a possible correlation

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larger reciprocation. In the chapters on Murngin kinship and local organization it was seen that the foundations of these structures are built entirely on reciprocity, and that the whole civilization might be described as in dynamic equilibrium. 181

Magic and War

Another belief centered around killing as a cause for war is that the spirit of the dead man enters the body of the killer and gives him double strength and actually increases his body size. When a man kills another during a tribal or interclan feud, he returns home and does not eat cooked food but subsists only on cold edibles until the soul of the dead man approaches him. He can hear the dead man's soul coming because the shaft of the spear which hangs from the stone head within the man drags on the ground and hits against the trees and bushes as he walks. When the spirit is very near, the killer can hear sounds coming from the dead man's wound (in a night fight the attacker usually strikes the sleeper's gullet). 775

The killer, ordinarily a young man and very frightened, in his fear runs to the camp of the old men. An old man tells him that he should not be afraid, but return and take the spear with which he has killed the man, remove the spear head, and put the spear end of the shaft between his own big toe and the toe next to it. The other end of the shaft is placed against his left shoulder. The left foot and side of the killer are used if he is right-handed, and the right side is used if he is left-handed. This is done so that the dead man's soul will not be afraid of the hand that killed its body. 775 788

The soul then enters the socket where the spear head was, and pushes its way upward into the leg of the killer, and finally into the body. It walks like an ant. It finally enters the stomach and shuts it up. The man feels sick and his abdomen becomes feverish. The killer rubs his stomach and calls out the proper name of the man he has killed (not his totem name, but his profane name). This cures him and he becomes normal again, for the spirit leaves the stomach and enters his heart. When the spirit enters the heart it has the same effect as if the blood of the dead man had been given to the killer. It is as though the man, before he died, had given his life's blood (powers, physical and spiritual) to the man who was to kill him. 775

The slayer, grown larger and exceedingly strong, acquires all the life strength the dead man once possessed. When the slayer dreams, the soul tells him that he has food for him and gives directions where 775 787

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to go to find it. He says, "Down there by the river you will find many kangaroo," or, "In that old tree there is a large honeybees' nest," or, "Near that large sand bank you will harpoon a very large turtle and find many eggs on the beach."

The killer listens, and after a little time sneaks away from camp by himself and goes out in the bush, where he meets the soul of the dead man. The soul comes very close and lies down. The slayer is frightened and cries, "Who is that? Somebody is near me." When he draws near where the spirit of the dead man was he finds a kangaroo, or, if he has gone to the sea beach, he discovers a turtle. It is unusually small. He looks at it and understands the meaning of its being there in the place where he had heard the movements of the dead man's soul. He takes sweat from under his arm and rubs it on his right arm, if he is right-handed, and on his left, if he is left-handed. He picks up his spear and calls out the name of the dead man and spears the animal. The animal is immediately killed but becomes much larger while dying. The man attempts to lift it. He finds it impossible because it has grown so large. He leaves the kill and returns to camp to tell his friends. He says when he arrives, "I have just killed the soul of the dead man. Do not let anyone hear of this because he might get angry again." His more intimate friends and relatives go out with him to help skin the animal and prepare it for eating. When they cut it up they find fat everywhere, which is considered one of the greatest delicacies in the native larder. When they cook it, only very small pieces are placed on the fire at first. They are tasted with much care, and the meat always tastes unpleasant.

Then the whole animal is cooked and a feast made with the parts more appreciated by the natives. The remainder is carried back to the main camp. The old men of the camp look and see that it is an animal of enormous size. They gather around it and someone asks, "Where did you kill him?"

"Up there by the river."

The old men know that this is no ordinary kill because there is fat everywhere. After some little time one of the old men asks, "Did you see somebody's soul out there in the bush?"

"No," lies the young man.

The old men then taste the flesh of the animal, but it does not taste the same as it ordinarily does. It has a slightly different flavor, it is not like a natural kangaroo or turtle.

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The old men shake their heads affirmatively and click their tongues: "You have seen the dead man's soul all right."

"Yes, he came to me yesterday and went inside my body. Last night when I dreamed he told me to go out in the bush. Today I went out and he came to me. I knew it was the soul of the dead man. When I sneaked up closer to make sure, I saw a small kangaroo lying there. I put sweat from my armpit on my throwing arm and killed him. The kangaroo grew as big as you see it now."

One of the old men replies to this effect: "We knew straightaway that this had happened because it always happens like this. It happened to most of us when we were young men."

No woman is allowed to eat any of the flesh of such an animal; only the old men, the killer, and his immediate male relatives partake of it. When a member of the Yiritija moiety is killed the killer sees an animal of that same moiety; after a Dua man is slain an animal from that moiety is later seen and killed.

Often the spirit of a man who has been killed appears in the guise of a crow, cockatoo, or other bird, and circles around and around the head of the slayer, or at times a honeybee may appear. When such creatures take the place of the spirit they always belong to the moiety of the dead man, and their function is to lead the slayer to the larger animal just as the soul does when it appears. A man only acquires the soul of the dead in a night fight, never in the daytime, because the one who has been killed sees the killer and his anger prevents the soul from entering the body of his killer.

When Mahkarolla had grown to early maturity he went with an expedition to an enemy clan and there killed one of its members in a night attack. He had been home but a few days when he noticed a crow flying back and forth very near his head. It seemed to have selected him from all the other men of the camp for its attention. The crow is Dua; the dead man's clan was Dua.

"This crow flew a little way from my camp. I looked and I saw a Dua honeybee flying away. I followed, for I thought it might be that I would find the honeybee's hive. I went into the bush and watched that honeybee. I went and went and I saw that tree, and up in the top of the tree that same crow was sitting. I knew what this meant. I took sweat from under my arm and rubbed it on my right arm. I looked up now and I could not see that crow any more. I think that he has changed into a honeybee. The tree was a small one when I first looked. Now it had become very large. I took my axe and cut it down. Most bees' hives are only in a part of a hollow log, but the honey in this one went from the ground all the way

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775 825 up the tree. When I split it open the tree grew even bigger. I understood now, for this dead man I had killed had brought me here.

"When I went fighting that time I was a very young man. No one had told me that when one killed a man his spirit entered one's heart, but after I had killed him the old men asked me if I had seen a soul and I said no and asked them what they meant. They said, 'There is a very big meaning for that; it is something maraiin [spiritual, taboo, sacred].' I understood then what they meant. I began to look for it.

"When I took the honey from the tree there were about seven or eight baskets full. I did not take it home. I left it. I went back to the camp by myself. I said to the old men, 'I have found out there a very large honeybees' nest. I have left the honey at the tree.'

"Some of the old men said, 'Let us walk just a little way from the camp and we will have a talk.' When we had walked a short distance and had sat down one old man said to me, 'What have you done? Have you dreamed anything?'

" 'Yes,' I said, 'I dreamed, but I did not understand then. I do not believe its meaning. I was going about then like a fool. This crow came, went round and round, and sat on a tree. Even then I thought that crow flew for nothing. I did not believe this one. Then I looked and saw the honeybee fly this way and that. I think then maybe I better follow him. The bee had something white on its nose and looked all the same as a bird.' I then told the old men how I found the honeybees' nest and what happened. The old people said, 'All the members of the dead man's clan are going to hear about this, and they are going to be very angry.' "

775 It can be seen that this belief would furnish ample cause, if there were no others, for young men anxious to become strong and adult to go out and kill enemies of the clan.

Types of Armed Conflict

628 There are six distinct varieties of warfare among the Murngin. Each has a separate pattern of behavior and an individual name. In addition to these there is another form in which only the women participate. The names are nirimaoi yolno, a fight within the camp; narrup or djawarlt, a secret method of killing; maringo (death adder), a night attack in which the entire camp is surrounded; milwerangel, a general open fight between at least two groups; gaingar (ghost spear), a pitched battle; and makarata, a ceremonial peace-making fight which is partly an ordeal. Each of the six forms will be described in detail.

In the seventy-two recorded engagements involving killings, twenty-nine men were slain by a gaingar fight, thirty-five by maringo, twenty-

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we circumcised those young men. That blood made her sick." One old man spoke up and said, "That blood made her sick. It makes women ill when they touch us after the Djungguan. It is the spirit in that blood that does this. It is the totem, not the wooden emblem, but the spirit inside with the power name. He is in that blood. A woman cannot touch it or it will make her sick." 753 826 784

Smaller rituals are performed by two or three individuals to cure someone who is ailing. Frequently women rub red ocher over their bodies because of an ailment, this being but an abbreviation of its use in the larger ceremonies. Red ocher string is tied around the head or body to cure a headache or abdominal pain. This act, too, is but a shortening of the ritual in which decorated string is placed around the head or body in the larger ceremonies. 755

Larger rituals are definitely used to remove pain. Certain parts of the Djungguan are designed to take away the pain from the boy who is being circumcised. The women relatives whip themselves in order to transfer the pain from the boy to themselves. The head of the boy's penis, they also say, is a turtle's head, so the cutting of the foreskin cannot hurt him since it is not his flesh being cut but that of the animal. These statements are also supposed to remove the pain from the boy. 785 826 831

Other rituals, which assure success in war, are demonstrably only elaborated magical practices. The gaingar spears represent the head of the Dua and Yiritja moieties. The souls of the dead of the moieties are supposed to be in each weapon. The ceremonial throwing of the spears to assure the killing of an enemy and to prevent the killing of their own men is definitely of a magical nature, the power of these ceremonies depending upon the souls' clustering around the spear just as the power of the magical killing stick depends upon the souls which cluster about its point. 778 789 775

The bone magic ceremony used in the maringo fighting (see Chapter VI, Warfare) is also an elaborate ceremony focused upon the magical idea of the soul's being associated with a bone relic. In earlier parts of this chapter the individual treats the bone in a ceremonial way to practice his magic against his enemies. Both the gaingar and the maringo ceremony from one point of view are elaborate magical practices participated in by the group and led by the ceremonial or war leader.

All the rituals, particularly the Narra, which celebrates the ascendancy of the clan totem, are commonly used to purify the group of 751 783

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blood, the heart's blood of a man or woman killed by magic, a hair belt from the head of a dead man, a gondjurma or killing stick used to puncture the heart of a sorcerer's victim, the body of a dead man, a burial platform where a body formerly lay but which has since been removed, the warro or soul which goes to the totemic well, and the mokoi or trickster soul. All of these items have a common element, namely, they are associated with the dead. Each one is directly and primarily related to some aspect of death. The dead, too, are looked upon as "inside," particularly because very shortly after death the sacred totemic emblem is placed upon the body of the dead. Women can no longer look at the corpse, which is immediately wrapped with paper bark and completely covered, exactly like a totemic object. The paper bark is now "outside" and something that the women can look at, while the dead, with the sacred emblem upon it, is now "inside" and dal. The dead belong to the world of the sacred (see mourning rites), and these objects, by their primary association with the dead, partake of this power.

Dal Magicians' Paraphernalia, and Relics.—A third category of dal objects—the paraphernalia of the magician and relics used by the ordinary man to give him extra-mundane aid in his hunting or fishing—are actually only a subdivision of the preceding category, since the power of magicians and the power of relics find their source in the sacredness of the dead.

The heart's blood of a man whose soul has been stolen by a magician is saved, and it often turns up in the hands of a magician or an ordinary layman in the form of a kind of resin, which is supposed to be the hardened blood. This can be used in fighting to give a little extra power, and in hunting or fishing it is used the same way as the shavings of a killing stick, to be described presently. Sometimes the heart's blood is placed inside the white magician's spirit bag to give it extra power. This blood gains extra mana by passing through the possession of a number of people and usually is traded in from more remote regions in the south.

When the body of a man killed by magic or in a spear fight is disinterred and the flesh removed from the bones, the finger bones are often distributed as relics among the clansmen and near relatives. These relics are wrapped in string and placed carefully in the possessor's dilly bag as reminders of the crime they feel has been committed. This is also true of pieces of the spear which remain in the body, and of pieces of bark or wood which the dying man may soak in his blood

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and present to his relatives as reminders. The power which these relics possess is due to the soul of the dead following the bones. The soul is a true or totem-well warro. It listens from the totem well and comes when it is needed for an avenging expedition or to help its possessor in time of trouble. Any account of a clan feud is always filled with the use of these relics. Usually, when a maringo expedition is starting, a magical ceremony is gone through by the avenging group in which the bone of the dead plays the central rôle and decidedly helps to a successful conclusion. The gondjurma or killing stick used by the black magician to puncture the heart of his victim has great power, first, because it is associated with the dead body, second, because it is believed that the souls of the victims cluster about the point, and third, because it gains power by passing through the hands of a great number of men as it is traded from clan to clan and from tribe to tribe. The soul which adheres to this magic is also the Wongar one. It is like a friend to its possessor and he is its master. All of these souls are in or on the stick and can be called for help in hunting or fishing. They will also come to a man when he dreams. They will help foretell the future for him. If he is to be ill, he will feel something pricking him like the end of the stick. If good things are going to happen, one of the souls will come and tell him. If a stick is supposed to have killed a large number of men, all of the souls are supposed to be with it, but actually they are looked upon as one, and it is not so much an individual soul as a kind of diffused power or mana. A killing stick can be in the possession of a magician, or he can give it to an ordinary man who is one of his friends. Such a stick is always kept wrapped in paper bark and covered just as though it were a totemic emblem or ceremonial object and must not be subjected to the profane sight of women or the uninitiated.

When a man wishes to obtain its power to help him in hunting he scrapes off pieces, chews them and swallows them the night before the hunt. Immediately afterwards he shuts his eyes, says nothing, and goes to bed. Next morning he utters not a sound and goes out with his spears looking for game or for fish. "Those souls which the stick killed before this have gone into the water or out into the bush and they have stopped the fish and game so that they can be found. When the man arrives he sees a few. He spits in the water (he is fishing) and a lot of fish come there. He spears one fish and when he spears the one all the rest go dead as if you had poison in the water."

If he were hunting kangaroo it would be impossible for him to miss,

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but he could kill only one, even though there were a herd of kangaroo there. The taboo of silence is placed on the man from the time he eats the gondjurma shavings until he is successful in the hunt "because it means you have the soul inside you and when you spit it goes out into the water. You can't talk or it would send him out before."

"One time," said an informant who had in his possession a killing stick he intended using, "I was down at the creek trying to catch fish. When I got there I saw Bang-gi-la. He had one of these sticks with him. He was ready to try it when I got there. He had not used fish poison. I looked at the end of the stick. It had been scraped. While I stood there the fish came to the top and were dead. I am going to try mine."

The dry heart's blood can be used in the same way and the magical process is exactly the same. "Wet blood is no good because it makes you sick. When you take wet blood you must keep it until it gets dry."

The stick insect, a creature which looks much like a praying mantis and is one of the minor totems among the western clans of the Dua moiety, is associated with the killing stick primarily because it has a stick-like shape. It is believed that dead souls are about it, and at times it is called wan-djuk by the western peoples, which means black magician. Its correct name is war-a-la war-a-la. It is believed that the warala warala sometimes helps sneak up on people and kill them. There is an ambivalent attitude taken toward this creature. The natives play with him when they see him hanging sluggishly to a limb, laugh at him, treat him rather roughly, yet in their more serious moments they speak of his association with black magic.

The power of the black magician and his technique and the power of relics used to harm one's enemies (a variety of black magic) find their source in the sacredness of the dead. It is the mana of the dead which gives this power to magic and which *is* this power. To the living, the greatest and most intense dysphoria which finds expression in the life of man is death. The more dead souls that cluster about the evil point of the killing stick, the more power the killing stick possesses; a punitive war expedition assures itself of success by the magic clustered in the power of the bone relic because the soul is with it. The ordinary living animal or fish is killed immediately by the magical power of the killing stick because the soul of the dead is associated with it. The dal of the magician is the dal of the dead. The relics express this same power because they are associated with the dead. A relic cannot kill, but it can remove many of the traits of the living

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and make a living man more like the dead. A man goes to sleep because a bone has been put in the fire by him and he is killed by his enemies (see the account of a clan feud in the war chapter). A man cannot run when chased by his enemies because one of them is blowing on a dead man's bone in his mouth, or an evil soul enters a man's head and makes him crazy, the power of the soul coming from that of the dead.

The two classes, that of the totem and of the dead, are but two varieties of one general type, for both of them belong to the world of the sacred. Their power is contagious and dangerous unless properly handled by ritual. The totem can cause sickness and death just as the power of the dead can produce these same effects.

The Behavior of the Individual and the Society When Magic Is Put into Effect

The isolation of the various elements in the particular social configuration surrounding the death of a victim of black magic may help illuminate the fundamental nature of Murngin magic and explain its potency and unusual effectiveness; and a general analysis of the group behavior under such a situation will be profitable.

When the supposed theft of a man's soul becomes general knowledge, the sustaining social fabric pulls away from the victim. The familiar attitudes of the kinship personalities change, the collaboration of the victim and his society, of which his social personality has always been an integral part, ceases. The group now acts with all the ramifications of its organization and with countless stimuli positively to suggest death to a suggestible individual. The ordinary daily activity of the victim's social life is removed. The society itself creates a situation which, if unchanged, makes it impossible for the individual to adjust himself to it even though he tried; and in addition he usually not only makes no effort to live and to remain part of his group but actually, through the multiple suggestions from it, cooperates in his withdrawal therefrom. He becomes what his society's attitudes make him, committing a kind of *suicide*. The social configuration in which he finds himself operating at this time is one of anomia[2] for him. His ordi-

[2] Emile Durkheim, *Le Suicide*, Librairie Felix Alcan, Paris, nouvel edition, 1930. In general, anomic suicide is a type supposed to be due to the change in the society which surrounds the individual and gives him a feeling of maladjustment and of being "lost." The change here, however, is more dynamic than one of process; that is, the society as a functioning structure regularly performs this act upon individuals whose souls have been stolen, rather than that the society changes in a structural way and becomes something different from what it was before and by so doing causes the indi-

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852 when he is after those two Wongar women." When "Rain Cloud"
796 was sung the leader said to me, "Those two women are trying to
113 stop that rain because it is coming like a flood and trying to cover
533 them up, it is all the same as if they were being swallowed by a snake."—"Those women are trying to sing to stop the rain but they are only making sounds" (that is, they are having no effect on the rain or snake)—also a comment when "Cloud in the Sky" was sung. —After the completion of this cycle, the leader said to me, "No man made these songs. Those two women made them to keep the two lines [Yiritja and Dua moieties] sacred—to keep marriage straight."

852 The singing of the real and mythological ancestors' names is much
796 more significant than merely recalling the names of the dead, for the
115 souls of the dead are believed to be within the totemic trumpet itself (and within Mandelprindi and Yermerlindi in the Gunabibi ceremony and Uvar in the Ulmark ceremony). "When we have Djungguan, Gunabibi and other corroborees we men tell the women when a man is dead [recently died] that he has come back because that Djungguan has been named his big name [totemic name]. All the men believe he has come back and that all the souls of the dead on that side [moiety reference] are in the ranga [totemic emblem]. If my older brother should die, next Narra or Djungguan we have, he would come back and go in that ranga. That is why we get angry when someone does a bad thing [unsanctioned sexual relation, open fighting, and the like] when we have a Narra or Djungguan. We must stop that corroboree and throw the ritual string away because our old marikmos and maris and kutaras [et cetera] get angry with us and make us sick.
[842] The little babies when they are fish [unborn] live in the same place with marikmo and mari souls. That marikmo and mari watch us. If we are good, and we don't steal, or have other men's wives, he sends us fish to our wives." "You can't see that spirit when it comes back but you can see it in a dream. That man can be Yiritja or Dua. The man who has dreamed goes to the leader and says that so-and-so has come back, and that he says he has come to look at his children and to bring Yurlunggur. That leader asks the man which way the man in the dream said to make Yurlunggur for this next time, because he knows the man understands from this dream." This dream can come before or at the same time as the ceremony and the power name of the returning dead man can be given to the trumpet. Even though "spirits go to the islands of the dead,[14] or the whale takes them to the

[14] See Myths, Barnumbir and the Island of the Dead, pages 524-528.

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Warumeri well, they come back to the ranga and go inside of it and into the well."

The souls of women likewise return: "When a woman dies she becomes a Bir-im-bir [spirit] Wongar and goes to the same well as a man. She can come back to her ranga and is like those two old Wawilak sisters."

When the men come out and take the boy away from the women, they are the snake or the flood and the women are the Wongar women who made the first camp. On the last evening when the men come out they stop at the edge of the camp and they sing rain. When the boys are left under the piles of bushes they are the children of the Wawilak women. "Those boys left there alone are all the same as those babies that were born to the Wongar women. They left their babies there the same way to dance: the women dancing around the Warngaitja mean that." When the men stand with their spears around the pole they sing rain, which means that the flood has come, and when they pull the warngaitja out of the ground and rush away and the others take the bushes off the boys and run away with them to the men's ground, the chorus sings flood. "That means that the flood came and took these two yam sticks and carried them away."—"A flood takes them away after the rain, that is why we sing Wa—wa—wa. That means that the flood water is running."

"When the boys lie there and the men pull the bushes off them that means that snake spitting them up. They are spirits now." (This refers to the first time the python swallows the two women.)

F. The Last Dances in the Men's Ground

1. The dancers are painted with human blood.
2. The boys who are to be circumcised are painted.
3. The initiates are shown the dances of the animals and the triangular ground and are instructed.
4. The older boys who have run away are caught and Yurlunggur comes out of the well and is shown to them.

1. The climax of the ceremony occurs next day. All the men paint with the blood that has been let the day before. The bloodletting occurs one day before the circumcision rite instead of the same day, because the exposure to the air gives the blood a more adhesive quality. The blood is now sacred and powerful. It is, say the natives, as if it were a totemic emblem in itself. It has the power of Yurlunggur in it because he blew over the blood-giver. It is also powerful because the

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763 very close to death. I had better die,' and when that spider song comes
533 he is dead and his soul leaves him."

The songs mean "he thinks of his totem and his totem well and he wants his spirit to go straight to his well when he dies." The man may call out the sound of water or make the cry of his totem. If, for example, a Liaalaomir were near death he would cry out like a python trumpet and "like that snake when he made rain."

As the garma song cycle reaches each totemic element in the sequence, a dying Warumeri clansman is supposed to make motions in imitation of the totemic animal; for example, when the relatives sing whale he kicks to simulate the movement of a whale's body in the sea. This is indicative of his immediate death, of which he is attempting to tell his father and mother. He is becoming like his totem. The father and mother understand the symbol and know then that death is certain. When a man dies he wants the songs of his father and his father's father's people sung into his ears and listened to by his ancestors before he passes away; i.e., he wants the songs of his own clan and his own moiety sung, so that even in death accent is on the patrilineal character of his inheritance and status in life, and the place where he is going and the change in his qualities.

533 The man goes into a coma. He is dead now, according to Murngin
763 thought, even though the heart still flutters. The relatives notice that
775 it is still moving and although they realize that the life of the body is finished they understand that the grandfather or the mari (mother's mother's brother) is looking out for him. They can tell this because the old ancestor has entered into the heart where the soul of the man has lived during his lifetime. The song cycle now repeats the words about a man going inside the jungle. The heart of the dying man is now ready for this. The soul listens for that song. "It is as though that soul had gone inside the jungle country which belongs to his clan's people. His father's father is taking the soul away." The last quick breaths come and the soul comes out of his heart and out of his windpipe and finally out of his mouth. He is dead.

The song now is to make the soul such a perfect character that he will find his ancestors and go straight to his totem well. "If we didn't sing he might go bad because evil ghosts (mokois) might catch him and take him out in the jungle country where they live. It is better that his old grandfathers and his ancestors come and get him and take him straight to his clan well where his totem came from."

763 Even though the garma song is being sung during a man's dying

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764 Any relative can make a hair belt for the dead man but the dead
765 man's brother gives that belt to their kutara or mari. Sometimes the
789 brother keeps it. That belt is very good in a fight. It makes you very strong. If you wear that one in a fight you can throw a spear that will go straight and kill that man you throw it at. This belt is good for ceremonies."

764 The painting, according to native thought, is so done that the old
715 ancestors can see which totem well the dead man belonged to and carry the soul immediately to its proper resting place. The old dead marikmo is supposed to announce loudly, "Oh, that is my young maraitcha." The evil mokois say, "No, this one belongs to us. We are going to take him." They argue about it, but the design upon the dead man definitely places him in the hands of his proper ancestors who prevent him from getting into the clutches of the evil mokois and take him back to his totem well.

[768] When a man dies his relatives move their camp some little distance away from the grave. Some of them call out, usually the mother, "If you want to see us you can come back now. Don't come back by and by." She is talking to the mokoi spirit rather than the warro spirit (soul) of the man. (See footnote, page 413.) When the mokoi spirit leaves the dead all the mokois of the many men who have died before make noises in the jungle. These evil spirits are calling out to this newly released spirit of the dead man. They make sounds as if they were coughing, for this is the way that mokois talk. They are saying, "Where is our son and our grandson?" The leader of the mourning ceremony calls out when these sounds are heard and the mokoi spirit of the dead man is supposed to come away from his body. The people carry fire sticks and go out to the jungle. There are two lines of them; they join in the center of the dance area, and the spirit is supposed to be in the sac-like space between them. The leader takes a fire stick from a man. He puts the fire stick against his chest and no one can see what he is doing. He runs and shows the fire. This is supposed to drive the spirit into the jungle and to finish his life with the living. It is thought by some that this is for the good soul and by other informants that this is for the bad soul, "and by some it is not believed at all." "We did that for Narnarngo's wife when she died. Marupila and I carried fire and we did not see that spirit. We said to ourselves, 'That whole thing is a lie. You can't see a mokoi that way.' Another time when I wanted to see a mokoi with my own eyes I tried at Elcho

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Island when a man died but I could see no spirit. I think that is a lie."

The father of the dead man or some other near relative has a large cake of palm-nut bread made by the women and divides this food among the members of his own moiety and those of the mother's group. This is supposed to force the dead soul to leave because he is not participating with the rest in the communion. Everyone is afraid to have the soul linger about the camp because it might go looking for fish and turtle and other animal food and frighten these animals away so that the living could not kill them.

The father or other relatives then build a small fire, gather and place on it bunches of green leaves until they are smoking, and then brush them over the bodies of all the people, both male and female, who are relatives of the dead person, with the purpose of chasing away the soul of the dead. This ceremony may be involved with a considerably longer ritual or may consist of the mere brushing of the smoking leaves on the bodies of the relatives.

After the garma fire ritual, mokul bapa, yeppa and mari (male and female) talk among themselves and then to the body and to its dead mari's and old marikmo's souls which are supposed to be by it. "Don't you cause trouble and get angry with us. We are only going to keep this dead man a little while, then we are going to give him to you and you can keep him, but don't you cause trouble." Sometimes the father or near relative dreams that the old grandfather has come to him and has said that he now should be in control of the new soul and wants that soul immediately.

The Garma or Main Camp Ceremony.—Since the various types of garma rituals are interwoven in all parts of the mourning ceremonies it seems best to digress a moment and describe all of them at once. The garma type of ceremony is found among all the clans of the tribes studied (except possibly the Liagaomir and Naladaer clans). The garmas are primarily for mortuary ceremonies but can be used for circumcisions. There is a considerable geographical variation in the kinds of garmas, particularly between those of the tribes centered around the western shores of the Gulf of Carpentaria and those among the peoples along the Glyde River. There is also a clan variation, since the various clans include in their cycle of songs objects which are of immediate significance to the clan. The clan variation is very slight, however, and usually for the purpose of including references to the totemic well and the objects surrounding it. There is a rather consider-

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"They see these fighting people and they fly up out of the trees, singing out." 764 533

(23) A man and woman looking for lilies.
"They are looking at the black duck in the lily places." This is a reference to the totem of the Warumeri, Wangurri, and Ritarngo Yiritja people.

(24) All the people going down to look for lilies (Yiritja people only).

(25) Mud taken up looking for lilies.

(26) Washing the lilies in the water to remove the mud.

(27) Washing themselves off after the mud has got on them.
This element in the sequence is often used for the ceremonial washing in the symbolic totemic well.

(28) Lilies in a basket.

(29) Walking from the lily place "to go look for a dry place to sit down."

(30) Taking a fire stick and burning the grass (Yiritja grass) to make a place for a camp. The burning leaves may be used to be brushed over the bodies of the mourners.

(31) Grass burning rapidly over the plains—a direct reference to burning the grass to facilitate hunting and to clear the paths, and an indirect reference to the smoke ceremony which chases away not only the mokois but the true soul of the dead.

(32) Rats.
"The rats are on the plain and they are running away from the fire. They are singing and are crying out." The rats have an inner meaning which refers to the souls of the dead leaving.

(33) Words and talk.
"The people are sitting down in the shade now and talking. They are talking about the sun going down."

(34) Spider.
"The spiders come out in the cool when the sun goes down. The spider puts up his web from tree to tree. He takes his string one place and goes to another place."

This ends the sequence of songs. At this point in the ceremony a man comes out and dances in front of the chorus holding his legs very high and moving his hands to imitate a spider spinning a large web. The spider is definitely associated with the soul of the dead. "We sing this way because our older people sang that way. All Yiritja sing that way. Dua sing different when their dead men die. I take my songs from my mari [mother's mother's brother] and my marikmo [father's father]; they [the relatives] are Yiritja." 764 [533]

"We sing for that warro soul and which way he has gone. He walks 764 775

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around the same way we sing. That food the relatives of that dead man give me when I sing this song so I can take those smoking leaves and put them in the fire and chase that spirit away and so we can go out hunting and that spirit will not bother us."

The living relatives talk to the recent dead both before burial and after, and continue until the bones have been exhumed, painted, and placed in the hollow log for their final interment.

In preparing the body for burial by painting the totemic design of the man's clan upon its chest and abdomen, one man usually stands by with his singing sticks and leads the singing while the others paint. He sings a list of garma songs, including a list of the paints being used in decorating the body. He then sings string and bark for tying up the body in a paper-bark coffin. The singing continues while the paper bark is being placed over the body and tied into position. When this operation is completed the singer sings the red cloud element in the song sequence, which is a symbol of the end of the song and of the operation.

The Mast Ceremony.—The relatives then call out for all the people to appear. They sing a new song cycle, the first element in which is a ship's mast that belonged to a Wongar Macassar.[4] Two or more men pick up the dead body and move it up and down as though they were lifting a mast. The chorus sings "Oh—a—ha—la!!" while the "mast" is laid down. When it is picked up again they sing

"O—o—o—o—a—ha—la!
A—ha—la!!
A—ha—la!!"

"The Macassar mast was like that," said my informant while viewing a burial ceremony with me. "Macassar man sang out when he raised a mast and when he did that all of us black men ran from our camps to see him go because all of us knew then that the Macassar was ready to go away. Some people would say, 'What's the matter with those Macassars, what are they doing?' and other people would say, 'Oh, they are going to another place because their mast is standing up straight.' This is all the same as that dead man because he is ready to go away. We people say the same thing about him. 'What is the matter with him?' and it is like that dead man saying back, 'I am standing up straight now, I am going away.' It is like an old Wongar

[4] For a full account of the influence of the Malay culture on the Murngin, see Social Change in North Australia, Appendix I.

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764 tinues to the open grave, the corpse being carried as though it were a mast.

Anyone can carry the body to the grave. The pallbearer can be either Yiritja or Dua. There is only one exception theoretically to that rule, and that occurs between gawel and waku; neither can carry the other's dead body. Each must keep away from the sweat of the dead man. If either should touch the body of his dead relative, he would not be able to eat food. If he should eat food, he would get a sore in his stomach.

764 The garma singing and dancing that now takes place may last from
533 the early morning until the late evening, but ordinarily it would occur only in the late afternoon. The cycle of songs sung can be either the sea or land group; sometimes both of them are sung. When the body is put in the grave the leader calls out the sacred power names, and also sings the sacred names of the totem well.

If the man were Yiritja, let us say Warumeri clansman, the leader would call out the following names:

Bir-ka bir-ka djar-a
(Ceremonial expression of the Yiritja moiety, spring water)
Bir-ka bir-ka mil-yar-ui
"A tree coming from the spring"
Bir-ka bir-ka ga-urn ga-urn
"Pebbles boiling in the spring water"
Bir-ka bir-ka ka-ka-lor-ui
"Small stones in the bottom of the spring"
Bir-ka bir-ka kar-a-ki-ar-oi
"Small valley where the spring water runs."

764 The corpse is then put into the grave, which is symbolically the sacred well of the dead man and his clan. The grave is about four feet deep. The corpse is placed face down and the body is laid out straight. If the knee should pull up it is straightened out. Flexed burial is not practiced here. The natives do not know why they put the body face downward.

764 The calling out of the sacred names is supposed to be a signal to the
● 775 marikmo and mari of the deceased to come and guide the soul to the totem well. After the several cycles of songs have been sung, the leader sings out earth. The earth is symbolically neither Dua nor Yiritja, and everyone including men, women, and children, throws a certain amount of earth into the open grave. The spirit is supposed to be under

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the dirt but the marikmo can pick him out and take him away. The earth is heaped over the body, grass is put on top and, at times, stones. Everyone leaves then and eats his evening meal.

A man is buried by his people so that he will rot and the flesh can be prepared for removal from the bones. The people who bury their dead say they do it so they won't have to see him rot.

(In platform burial the body is placed face upward so that when the abdominal wall breaks the intestines will not fall. The platform is not torn down when a body is removed. It is always avoided thereafter, although the feeling is rather slight about it. Ordinarily women feel a greater sense of taboo about it than men. They always pass by at some little distance because "they are afraid that that mokoi is still there." The men, when they are with the women, sometimes tease them by grunting and coughing like mokois, and laugh when the women jump. The women laugh too, but usually not until later.)

The men then call out the names of the dead male mari and marikmo of the dead man. The groups, singing, quarrel with the people for what they did to the deceased, and the dead ancestors are supposed to blame the living for not taking better care of the dead person when he was alive. While this singing is going on, the chorus dances with spears and knives to simulate a fight between the living and the dead. Once more the garma cycle of songs is sung. The people then clap their hands, symbolical of the Macassar drum, and finally the red cloud element in the garma sequence is sung to indicate that the ceremony is over.

The Grave Post.—The next day, or a few days after the burial, the grave post is erected and a mast of a Macassar design is also placed over the grave. Both the grave post and the mast are carried through the camp while a Murngin version of a Macassar prayer is said over it and the chorus sing a response to the prayer. Food is begged from all the members of the camp who are not participating as near relatives in the ceremony. All the male relatives of the deceased who are later ceremonially to eat the food in ritual communion, paint themselves. The designs are those of the totem of the man who died, which usually means the totem of all the men engaged in the ceremony except those on the mother's side of the kinship group. When a Warumeri dies, for example, the men paint themselves as whales just as the dead body has been painted and as his totemic emblem and poles are painted. The post also announces to the ancestors that the body is buried beneath it.

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764 Two basins symbolic of totem wells are made over the grave by heaping up earth into two separate compartments with channels leading out from them. The wells represented are the dead man's and those of his nati, which means that they belong to both moieties, and both sides of the man's elementary family of orientation are symbolized. These wells are made for both the Yiritja and the Dua kinsmen to eat in. All the men of the nearby clans who are relatives of the dead gather there and eat the food that has been prepared in the camp. If anyone else attempted to eat there it would cause trouble among the near kin.

The putting up of the mast over the grave symbolizes the people telling the departed one a final goodbye. The grave post, in the eyes of the natives, "is just the same as the dead body. It means that you can look at the grave post and remember where the soul has gone." Grave posts are also put up in the camps which are far distant from the grave of the dead. Additional grave posts are erected if a man is felt [554] to be important. Children and women ordinarily would not have more than one grave post erected for them. Sometimes in the case of children no posts are erected. The grave posts of the Dua people are supposed to be symbolic of the two Wawilak sisters.

The grave of a child is usually placed within the main camp. The grave of an older person is usually at the edge of the camp. Sometimes 769 when the people have left a grave and gone to another place a chance 775 visitor who has not heard of the death arrives in the camp and discovers the grave. This makes matters difficult for him because he is liable to be followed and have tricks played on him by the mokoi of the dead person. There is a method, however, of fooling the evil spirit. The man who has been placed in this embarrassing position goes to a nearby tree and makes a small toy spear and spear-thrower and hides his own spears and spear-thrower in the bush. He takes the play spear and spear-thrower to the newly made grave and he addresses the mokoi, "Now don't you follow me. I am going to come back." He puts the spear and spear-thrower on the grave to prove that he will return, since no man would walk around in the bush without his spear-thrower and spears. The man then returns to his own spear and spear-thrower, and the mokoi, who has been fooled, does not follow him.

765 While the grave post is up and before the bones have been exhumed and placed in the hollow log, outsiders are not allowed in the immediate camp of the parents or near relatives of the deceased. At this time the house of the parents is burned, the garma dance is held,

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CHAPTER XIII

INTERPRETATION OF MURNGIN DEATH RITUALS—AN INTEGRATION OF MURNGIN SOCIETY

ALL THE elements of the mortuary ritual are designed, first, to remove the profane part of the human being who has died and, second, to spiritualize his soul and make it like his totem. The first ceremony sung over the dead (see pages 413-414) demonstrates the intent of the whole ritual. The names of the totems are sung to enable the dying man to act like his totem and become like it, that is, to be completely spiritualized and to remove any of the profane part of his personality. The intent of the ceremony is further demonstrated by the direct native interpretation of the actions of the individual who is mortally wounded in a fight and who performs his totemic dance to direct his soul to his well. In addition, his grandfather or collateral dead kin are believed to come for him to aid him to his well and prevent evil spirits from getting him. The totemic emblem aids their identification of him and makes him "all the same as a totem," just as the carved wooden stick or a wad of bark becomes the totem when it has the emblem placed on it and is ritually sung over. The singing of the garma songs helps direct the soul to the water hole, for "we sing for that warro (soul)—he walks the way we sing." The grave is made symbolically into the sacred totemic well and the Macassar leaving ceremony tells the soul of the dead a last farewell. The grave post and mast are also symbols of this final goodbye. In the exhumation ceremony of some of the clans the body is symbolically speared because it is a whale (totem). The temporary bark receptacle is painted with the totemic emblems, and the coffin itself, which is the final repository of the bones, is a mythical creature associated with the totem. All this clearly shows that one of the primary motives of the ceremony is symbolically to translate the soul out of all profane and worldly contacts and place it finally in the sacred totemic water hole. Another fundamental motif in the mourning ritual is to remove all contact of the dead from the living. The dead person is powerful because he is now a

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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182 soul and because he has died by magic; these two concepts enter pro-
764 foundly into Murngin thinking about their dead relative. As a soul he
●775 can be properly handled by ritual and translated back to the world of
765 the dead, but as a victim of magic—and all the dead are such victims —he is very dangerous (see the chapter on magic). There are, then, a whole series of purificatory rites which serve to sever the dead's relationship to the living. They are of two varieties: the first is symbolically to force the separation from the living, and the second to propitiate the soul and tell it to go quietly to its totem well and not hurt the living. The second variety tends to prolong the ceremony as if the living people were loath to give up the soul to the dead. The first takes concrete symbolic form in the fire ceremonies which chase the soul away, the spider web dance which catches the soul, the pelican or net dance which does the same, and the removal from the group of the scapegoat who has carried the bones. In the second the songs express the indignation of the dead ancestors toward the living because the recently dead was not given better treatment and because the bones were retained by the female relatives.

182 The last primary motif in the mourning rites is found in the various
765 symbolic rituals performed to reintegrate the society, close its ranks after the removal of one of its members, and once more assert its solidarity. Ceremonial food is gathered from the whole group and eaten in the sacred wells made over the deceased's grave and at various other times during the ceremonies. The entire group paints itself and participates in the communion. This general participation is also to prevent the magic which killed the dead from harming the living. The symbolic expression of group solidarity (if the writer's theory of magic is correct) prevents the harmful effects of magic from spreading.

182 The relatives of the dead cannot be in too great haste to dispose of
764 the body or remove the soul from contact with the living, but neither
761 can they keep the soul too long, ("don't be too angry with us,"—see page 417). In either case the ancestors would not like it and would be offended. The living relatives have an ambivalent attitude toward their dead relative. They feel the strong social bond they once had for him. There is a consequent desire to keep him a part of the living and with them, and there is at the same time a feeling of abhorrence and repugnance. The long mourning ritual expresses these contradictions of attitude.

182 The burial of the body for several months allows the emotions of
765

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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the bereaved relatives to settle; the later digging up of the bones, the women's carrying them, and the final reburial give ample time for the emotions finally to adjust themselves to this major crisis. 182 765

An examination of the kinship structure alone, without any conception of the total social personality or social participation of the former member of the living group, shows that if a man's father-in-law, for example, is taken by death from the social group, part of the social structure of the bereaved man is removed—at least the content of that part of the structure is gone. This forces a considerable readjustment by the living son-in-law, not only to his dead kin but to the dead's other relatives who are also his own. It seems highly likely that the period of mourning corresponds fairly definitely to the period of readjustment of the social structure to this social loss. The best evidence of this is that a baby, particularly a newborn child which has little or no social personality and has not become a part of the social structure, frequently has no ceremony for its burial; the women dig a shallow hole, deposit the body in it, and cover it—and it is quickly forgotten.

The social personality of a woman is less developed than that of a man (she does not participate, for example, in large parts of the ritual or directly in any of the spiritual behavior of the group, et cetera). The ceremonies for her are much less elaborate than those for a man. The ordinary man has less made of his burial than a man renowned for his feats of war, unless he has been killed by a blood feud. The death of an ordinary man by the blood feud organizes the major antagonisms and creates strong solidarities in the surviving group of kinsmen and those of the killer. The man who has participated the most in his social structure—a man, for example, who has been a great fighter, a ceremonial leader of his clan, and powerful in his kinship relations—is the person who has the strongest social bonds and who is mourned for the longest. A very old man is given less time in his mourning ritual than a man in the prime of life because his lateral and ascending kinship bonds are less strong—that is, the relatives who provide these bonds have previously died. 182 765 554

The Murngin Soul in Life and in Death.—Each Murngin man and woman has two souls. One is looked upon as fundamental and real, and is felt to be the true soul, the soul from the heart, while the other is considered a trickster, of little value, and only in a vague way associated with the "true man." The first is the birimbir or warro, and the second is the mokoi or shadow soul. The warro is the totemic well 774 775

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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spirit. It can be seen reflected in the water when one looks in it. It comes to one during good dreams. The warro, when a man dies, becomes "all the same as a fish." It lives with and in the totemic emblems. "He walks about with the ranga in the water down below in the well. Our old people reckon this way: he must be all the same as a fish because if a man's canoe tips over out in the middle water of the ocean that old relative's warro comes and helps us, saves our life and takes us up to the shore. If my son went out in the deep water with his canoe he would call out for Banitja [one of the totems of his clan]. After he had taken sweat from under his arm and spit into the water, then he would call out for the warro of his marikmo and mari. Those warros of his mari and marikmo would come all the same as a fish to help him. Warros swim and look like fish. When I look in the water he looks like me. Banitja and warros will also save a man from the sharks as well as from drowning. All the people have warros."

The trickster soul is called shadow soul before death and mokoi when it leaves the body and goes into the jungle and bush country. "Our old people reckon that the shadow soul is all the same as a bad spirit. It's that thing that makes me bad. My shadow always comes with me. The shadows of other things and creatures [beside man] are not souls but only shadows." The mokoi soul is supposed to live more or less all over the body. It is a kind of vague duplicate of it. Sometimes one is told that only the head of a man is made into a mokoi at his death and that mokoi has no body. In the pictures drawn of it and the representations made in the dances, the mokoi is always possessed of a body, but it is distorted and made to appear ugly and unpleasant.[1]

The warro is constantly undergoing change of status. It originates in the totem well, comes to its human father in a dream under miraculous circumstances where it is directed to its mother's womb, lodges there, is born in a normal number of months, and then lives in the heart of the new human organism during the period of the organism's life of the flesh unless it is stolen by a black sorcerer. After death there is a period of some indecision between the land of the living and the land of the dead, but it finally returns to the totemic well whence it came. It is in the symbol of the soul and its relations to the sacred and profane elements in Murngin civilization that we find mirrored the structure and values of the society. The soul supplies the eternal element to the cultural life of an individual Murngin. It lifts man from

[1] The Murngin ideas about the mokoi spirit are varied and somewhat confused.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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the simple profane animal level and allows him to participate fully in the sacred eternal values of the civilization that was, is, and will be. It finally and eternally ties the man whose heart it occupies to his totem, the symbol of all clan unity in Murngin culture, since the soul at death is one of the prominent elements in the configuration of associated items found in the clan's totemic water, the water which is the essence of life. Here live the great totemic ancestors who existed in the time of the Wawilak creator sisters when the Wongar totems walked the earth, and whose sacred names are used by the profane living only when these living have been purified by the great rituals, when they are part of the sacred and eternal elements in the culture, when man and his totems participate as one in the totemic rituals. Here, too, in the well, lie the totemic ancestors who died at the beginning of time, and the more recently dead whose emotional bonds with the living are still strong. The more recent ancestors who have gone through the long purifying mortuary ritual which removed all the profane elements of the personality (whose mokoi spirit has gone into the bush with his other evil comrades) are, in their nature, of such sacredness that they can be absorbed into the body of the totem itself. And when the totemic essence of the totem animals is induced into the emblem, they also enter and participate in the spiritual life of the Murngin during the great rituals and then return to the sacred water hole. After the ritual, the emblem is buried beneath the mud of the totem well and allowed to rot, and the ancestor spirits and the totemic spirit return to the subterranean depths. Man goes through exactly the same cycle of existence as the totemic spirit. The totemic spirit enters into the sacred water hole, goes through the ordinary water at the top of the well into the subterranean depths, and finally into the totem water beneath, where the Wongar ancestors live, becoming a part of the sacred configuration. The soul does exactly the same thing.

The soul, the totemic spirit, the Wongar or totemic ancestors, are all expressions of the fundamental sacred essence, the ultimate symbol of which is the totemic well, which is the repository of all the individual items which have been or will be incarnate in man or his religious objects.

The kinship organization classifies the social elements of ordinary behavior. The primary kinship system regulates the basic behavior such as marriage, descent of children, gift-making, economic behavior, et cetera. The moiety and clan generalize and classify this detailed kinship behavior into larger patterns; and they also articulate the ordinary

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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daily life of the people as it is lived by the kinship group, to the totem well, and the individual to the realm of the sacred and the dead.

The unilateral clan differentiates certain lines of patrilineal kin from the kinship totality and organizes them into a spiritual group, the focal center of which is the clan totem well. The totem well as the integrating nucleus of clan solidarity organizes clan sentiments into a sacred unity. The basic factor in this spiritual organization is the relation of the living to the dead and the unborn. The dead souls are grouped into spiritual aggregates based on clan organization. They do not enter into general tribal groupings in the land of the dead, they do not divide on the dual basis of the moiety; but the various male relatives are separated in death if they do not belong to the same clan. Although in life there is an intensely close relationship between the mother's brother and his nephew, in death these relatives are separated by the division of the kinship system into clan groupings of the dead. It is, then, the clan division of the kinship system which orientates the living Murngin to the profane and sacred parts of the totem well and at death places him within the sacred part of the realm of the dead.

The two great classifying structures of Murngin culture are the kinship system and the totem well, both of which generalize the various elements in the total structure. The first basically controls the ordinary daily behavior of the Murngin, and the second organizes spiritual behavior and regulates the activities of the dead. The totem well classifies the totality of the sacred elements of the Murngin social structure. The totemic spirits, the totemic ancestors, the unborn souls and the souls of the dead are all thought to reside within the subterranean depths of the well. It is difficult to distinguish these sacred objects from one another. Even the recently dead soul can become a part of the totem and return in the totemic emblem to participate with it in the great rituals of the people.

The relation of the living to the dead and also the relation of the profane to the sacred can best be presented by Chart XVI. The line A-B separates the sacred from the profane. The seven vertical lines in the lower section which are crossed by the five lateral lines to form the checkerboard with the star at the right center, represent the primary kinship structure of the Murngin. The vertical lines are the patrilineal descent lines and the horizontal are those of generation. The cross-sections of the two form the kinship personality. The star represents Ego. His line and the line to the right of him, which is the mari-

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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765 533 trumpet is brought out and accompanies the singing sticks in the songs.

(13) Yurlunggur.

All the songs before this were the garma variety and could be sung in the general camp. Now the leader takes up the Djungguan song itself. Yurlunggur is blown over the bones just as over the initiates in the Djungguan ceremony. "Yurlunggur is trying to take the dead man's spirit to the totem well. 'You can come to me now,' he says."

765 While Yurlunggur has been trumpeting, the dué and galle (male) have tied up the bones in a paper-bark bundle. They take the bones and leave them back in the bush. They make a camp for themselves a short distance from the main camp and construct a special bush house in which to place the bones. Later—there is no specified interval of time—these relatives bring the bones back to the edge of the camp. Yurlunggur is supposed to come with them, which means that the totemic trumpet is brought out. The leader pours water on the two men (dué and galle), then covers them with red ocher. While this occurs, a new sequence of songs is sung:

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(1) Basket (that which is used for the bones).
(2) Tree (wood used for rangas).
(3) Mangrove where the catfish makes his spears.
(4) Catfish (bartna).
(5) Small fish again.
(6) Fresh water for washing.
(7) River water.
(8) The log trap placed in rivers for catching fish.

It is at this point that the men are painted with red ocher.

765 During the period in which the bones are left in the bush the women are told that the snake has swallowed them and taken them away with him. They are not told that the bones are in the hands of the men until the bones are turned over to the women to be carried by them until final disposal.

[783] The bath and red ocher for the men who have cleaned the bones and kept them in the bush are not only to take away the stench from the men, but also to remove their ceremonial uncleanliness. The parents of the dead [431] always ask these relatives to perform the service of cleaning and keeping the bones, and in return for this service they give presents. The presents usually are the best, which means that the ranga is given. It will be noticed that the two, dué and galle, belong to one moiety and the dead man and his parents to the other; the exchange of services is across the moiety line.

765 The stench of the body which is upon the dué and galle is not different 775 from the sweat of a living man and just the same as the spirit itself. If

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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the men continued to smell this way it would be as though they had swallowed the spirit of the dead man.

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When the bones are returned to the main camp the sequence of garma sung during the first part of the ceremony, when it is thought the sick man is about to die, beginning with the stringy-bark flowers and ending with the Mirrirmina well, is repeated. This is sung while the bones are taken out of the paper-bark basket and put in another one. Red ocher is put on the bones at this time, which "is the same as putting the spirit back in the well again." When the bones are being wrapped in the paper bark the small fish are once more sung. The bones are then left on the outside of the camp and the men go on to the men's ground and paint themselves. They are supposed to be rock pythons. They then come outside to the main camp and dance the following sequence:

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(1) Rain, which is the snake's spittle.
(2) Coucal gurundula.
(3) A meteor falling (djam-bu-la).
This is the sign of a man dying and is looked upon as the departure of his spirit.
(4) Whirlwind (wa-kar), which is also a spirit.
(5) A particular kind of rain which means that the wet season has commenced.
(6) Coucal (again).
(7) Stringy-bark flower and tree.
(8) Honeybee flying.
(9) The stench of the dead man is to be put away in a hollow log coffin.
(10) The phalanger.
(11) They continue by dancing the stringy-bark-flower to Mirrirmina-well sequences of songs.

When the warala warala song is sung, two dancers bring out the marai yirri. This is like the spirit of the yam which ran into the sacred water hole and also like the spirit of the dead man. The two men are painted with patterns which represent the "string harness" of women. They are supposed to be women and also warala waralas. They carry the dead man's bones. The chorus of all the men stands on one side in a group and the two men facing them dance up and down before them. The men dance pretending they are going to take the bones away. The chorus pretends that it is trying to pull them back. They dance from the center of the camp to the edge of the bush while the leader calls out the sacred names of the totemic well. The chorus is supposed to win the contest, and the bones are then given to the mother or wife of the dead man. The women beat their heads and cry, frequently cutting themselves with stone knives.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 O117 Murngin O117

women. In my collections of bark paintings there is, fortunately, a series dealing with the *Djunkgao* myth, which is associated with localities extending from Port Bradshaw, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, to Goulburn Island on the north coast. These paintings show a gradual shift from male to female dominance as the myth moves westward.

At Jelunghara, near Port Bradshaw, where *Djunkgao*[10] and his sister first landed, it was *Djunkgao* with his digging sticks who created most of the waterholes and topography, his sister being relatively unimportant. At Arnhem Bay[11] some thirty miles westward, although *Djunkgao* created the waterholes, he was under the dominance of his sister, *Madalait*. About fifty miles west of Arnhem Bay, and south of Elcho Island, is a sacred waterhole, Milmigarak, which was created by the *Djunkgao*, who by then had become two sisters, instead of brother and sister. Some elements of the *Wawilak* myth are incorporated in this one.[12] In the *Djunkgao* myths of the Milingimbi area, recorded by Warner,[13] the *Djunkgao* are two important female ancestors who named the animals, plants and birds, and created many sacred waterholes.

As most of the bark paintings dealing with *Djunkgao* have separate myths, each painting will be described in association with the relevant myth.

Djunkgao and Madalait at Port Bradshaw

The myths associated with this collection of bark paintings, carved figures and ceremonial objects deal with both the arrival of *Djunkgao* and his sister *Madalait* at Port Bradshaw[14] and the origin of some of the totemic designs of the *riredjingu* language (*mala*) group associated with the *Djunkgao* at Port Bradshaw.

In early *bumun* (creation) times *Djunkgao*, his wife *Walo*, the sun-woman[15] their daughter, *Bara-barurinja* and *Madalait*, his sister, lived at Tjurinjina, a place far across the water to the east of Yirrkalla.[16]

One day *Djunkgao*, having decided to go on a journey to Port Bradshaw, set out in his bark canoe, taking his sister with him, but leaving his wife, the sun

10. Myth, p. 273. 11. Myth, p. 275. 12. Myth, p. 275.
13. Warner (1937), p. 330.
14. The carved figures and ceremonial objects are described in Part 3.
15. Berndt (1952), p. 3, states that the Djanggawul [*Djunkgao*] people were closely associated with the sun. One myth tells that the sun had two daughters who later became the *Djunkgao* sisters. In the myth of the sun, p. 502, which I collected in association with the relevant bark painting, Pl. 85E, the sun-woman, *Walo*, was the wife of *Djunkgao*. Their home was not at Purelko (Berndt's Bralko or Bralgo), but at Tjurinjina, some distance beyond.
16. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 28, state that Djanggawul [Warner's and my *Djunkgao*], his two sisters, Maralait[a] [my *Madalait*] and Bildjiwuruoiju, and a companion, Beralbural, came from Bralko [Warner's and my Purelko]. Later Berndt (1952), p. 2, corrects this statement and reveals that the party 'came from a far distant country, and on their way to the Arnhem Land mainland stopped at Bralgo [Purelko], the *dua* moiety island of the dead.'

My aboriginal informants were definite that the *Djunkgao* party came, not from Purelko, the *dua* 'heaven', but from Tjurinjina which, although it lies in the same general direction as Purelko, is not the same place. This statement, and Berndt's later correction, are important because they dispose of the evidence that an important mythical ancestor originated in the home of the dead, evidence which might give rise to a theory that the aborigines of Yirrkalla believe in reincarnation.

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took from the hive so much wax, bee bread (the pupae of bees) and honey that it filled one of the honey baskets. The place where the tree fell is now the fresh-water stream, Gurakawi, which runs into Trial Bay. 773*

Again the brother and sister walked northwards, this time searching for the *dun* female wild honey, *liranar*. Near Caledon Bay they again followed a bee to its hive and, after cutting down the tree, filled another honey basket. The depression made by the fallen tree has since become the Mandarauik River. Still searching for honey, the brother and sister saw many bees near Port Bradshaw but were unable to locate the hive, because the bees, instead of flying to and from their nest, were drinking at a spring. The next bee led them on a long journey from Caledon Bay, cross-country, to Cape Wilberforce, where the contents of a particularly large hive at Jarauu, near Melville Bay, filled many baskets. Again, the tree they felled created a watercourse, this time the Wandarani River.[78] [532]

As *Dijal* and *Neri-neri* were pounding the comb to extract the honey, the sound attracted the attention of a lizard-man. Seeing the brother and sister had collected so much honey, he asked for some and they willingly gave it to him. But as the lizard-man was eating the honey a fragment of stick caught in his throat, causing him to cough and almost choke. For a long time he tried unsuccessfully to extract the stick, then, in disgust, he changed himself into a blanket-lizard, *baltjira* (*Chamydosaurus kingii*). The aborigines say that the stick, now a thin bone, is still in the throat of the lizard. [825]

After that incident *Dijal* and *Neri-neri* went to a group of large caves near Melville Bay and started to cook the wild honey in a large bark dish.[79] While they were engaged in the task an ancestral man, *Wulangini*, was cooking fish at Port Bradshaw. On seeing the large amount of honey the brother and sister were preparing he held up his fish to show what he was cooking, hoping that *Dijal* would offer him some honey in exchange. But *Dijal* insulted *Wulangini* by saying that he did not want his fish; honey was much better food.

After the honey was cooked, *Dijal* and his sister went into the caves, where they have lived ever since. No aboriginal will go near the locality, for fear of *Dijal*, who would cripple him by breaking his legs with boomerangs, then spear but not kill him. *Dijal* would then put the wounded aboriginal in a bark dish, take him into his cave, pound his shins with a stone until they were bent like a boomerang, then starve him to death.

The spirit of such a man, unlike those of other aborigines, does not go to the aborigines' heaven, but lives in the forest until able to enter the body of some woman. When born that child will develop boomerang shins.[80] [175]

78. See engraved smoking pipe, Fig. 820. [222]

79. Some kinds of honey, when first taken from the hive, burn the throat. After this 'hot' honey, called *bilku*, is cooked by heating it for a while in a bark dish resting in the hot sand and ashes of the camp fire, it becomes much milder in flavour. Cooked honey is *baluruu*. [852]

80. The shins of some aborigines are curved and flattened like a boomerang. This is caused by the tropical disease of yaws. [164]

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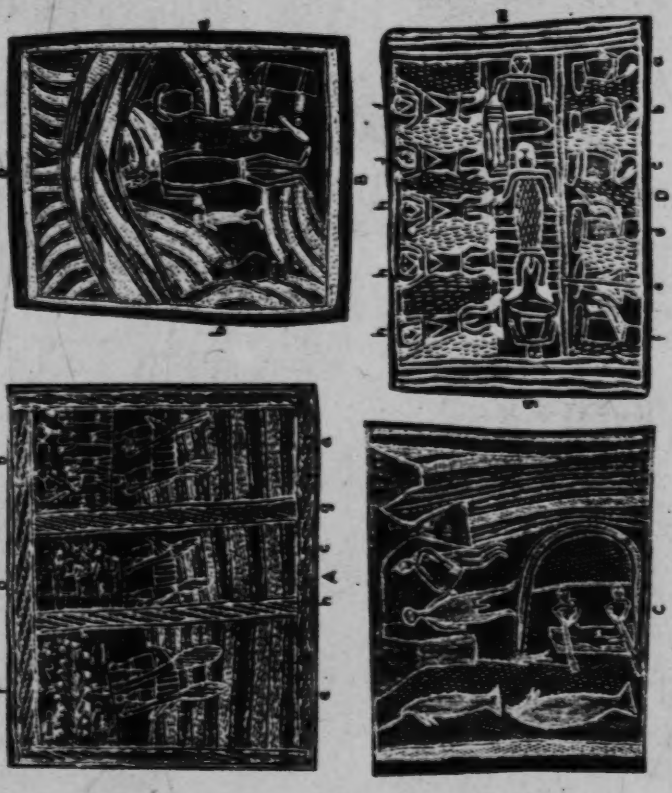

PLATE 99. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A The journey of the dua dead B Dua conception beliefs
C Jirija conception beliefs D Burial, cleansing the bones

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THE ART OF YIRRKALLA

(b) DEATH AND BURIAL

There are three important events in the life of every male aboriginal of Arnhem Land—in fact, in the life of any tribalized Australian aboriginal: birth, when he leaves the land of the spirits and enters the every-day world; initiation, when he is admitted into the sacred or ritualistic world, where age makes him increasingly important; and death, when he leaves the every-day world, and again enters into the land of the spirits.

Although there are few rituals associated with birth, those of initiation and the later age-grading ceremonies are long and complicated, for it is by these ceremonies that men are admitted deeper and deeper into the secret life of the tribe.

At death, the burial rituals extend over many weeks, their purpose being not only to send the spirit so happily to its future home that it will not be a danger to the living, but also to allow the living to adjust themselves to their loss.

The burial ceremonies at Yirrkalla have three main phases: (i) the ceremonies at death, (ii) the cleansing of the bones, and (iii) the final burial, after which the spirit of the dead leaves for its aboriginal 'heaven'. If the dead are of the *dua* moiety, the spirit goes to Purelko, and if of the *jiritja*, to Nalkuna.

(i) *The Ceremonies at Death*

When a man dies his relatives gather round the dead body, wailing loudly, the women cutting their scalps with sharpened bones until the blood flows freely. After a short period of wailing the men form a group apart from the women and chant the long series of songs which belong to the totemic group of their dead companion. Next morning the men proceed with the rites of burial, first by rubbing red ochre over the body of the corpse, and on that painting his totemic design.[13] The men also make two bark effigies[14] which they put under the arms of the corpse. They explain to him that the effigies are his children, whom they have killed and placed beside him to prevent him being lonely and wishing to return to haunt the living. The corpse is then wrapped in a thick layer of paper-bark and tied with string.

While all this is being done, other men are erecting a platform of logs about five feet in height and covering it with a layer of leaves. Then, while the men chant another series of totemic songs belonging to the dead man, two aborigines

13. This totemic design is the same as that painted on his body during circumcision. See body paintings associated with circumcision, Pl. 128. Warner (1937), pp. 415-16, in his description and interpretation of the mortuary rituals of the Murngin, an adjacent people, records that the totemic design is painted on the body of the dead man so that the spirits, or *Mokoi*, can identify him.

14. Similar to the bark figures, Fig. 65C, D. Frazer (1936), p. 59, records: 'In Tahiti . . . the priest took a number of small slips of plantain leaf-stalk, fixed two or three pieces under each arm of the corpse, placed a few on the breast, and then, addressing the corpse, said, "There are your family, there is your child, there is your wife, there is your father, and there is your mother. Be satisfied yonder (that is, in the world of the spirits). Look not toward those who are left in this world."'

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climb to the top of the platform and, taking the corpse from those below, lay it on the bed of leaves,[15] face upwards.

As the two men descend, others blow a wooden trumpet informing the *Mokoi*[16] of the death, knowing that they will take the spirit from the locality for a time so that it will not be a danger to its living relatives. At the same time another man climbs a tall tree and makes a noise like the night-bird, *kunuwuk* (associated with the *Mokoi*).[17] As soon as the aboriginal in the tree hears the *Mokoi* coming (they make a coughing sound) he descends quickly and with the rest of the mourners runs quickly from the burial ground. This is done, not only to make the dead man's spirit go with the *Mokoi*, but because the *Mokoi*, particularly that of the newly dead man, are dangerous to the living.

(ii) *The Cleansing of the Bones*

For the next two or three months no one goes to the burial platform. When, however, putrefaction is complete, the maggots from the body have entered the ground and turned into blowflies, the aborigines meet to perform the second phase in the burial rituals, the cleansing of the bones.[18]

Totemic dances belonging to the clan of the dead man are performed to the accompaniment of much singing, the beating of music sticks and the blowing of the wooden trumpet. The noise of these rituals is supposed to scare the spirit of the dead man and his ghostly attendants, the *Mokoi*, from the burial platform. The body is lifted from the platform or, if an earth burial, exhumed and a curious ritual performed over it, in which two men sit, one on either side of the corpse, whilst a third thrusts a spear into it, saying that he has speared a turtle.[19] The women, who have been sitting at one side, then come forward, take the skeleton apart, wash the bones in water and wrap them in paper-bark to remove the smell. At the end of three days the women unwrap the bones, rub them with red ochre and place them in a temporary bark coffin, on the outside of which the men have painted the totemic symbols of the deceased.[20]

15. If when a man dies there are only a few people present, the corpse is wrapped in paper bark and buried in the ground.

16. The *Mokoi* (*jiritja*) and *Wana* (*dua*) are spirits living in the jungle, who are always seeking souls of the newly-dead for company. A dead person has two spirits, one, *wokuna*, which usually goes to 'a distant "heaven" (p. 325) and one which stays on earth. The latter are the *Mokoi*. (See Warner (1937), p. 116; also p. 336.) There are, however, many kinds of *Mokoi*, and our information about them is very limited.

17. See ceremonial staff of *kunuwuk*, Pl. 151E.

18. See description of bark coffin, p. 317.

19. The significance of this ritual is obscure. Warner (1937), p. 113, refers to it. A similar ritual is supposed to be carried out at Purelko, the final resting place of the *dua* dead, p. 325.

20. Frazer (1936), p. 5, mentions that, 'In Misol, a small island to the north-west of New Guinea, . . . the body, wrapped in clothes, is deposited on a scaffold built for it in the forest. From time to time the relations come to inspect the corpse until decomposition is complete. The skeleton is then brought to the place, generally a cave, where the bones of all the dead inhabitants of the village are collected.' This is a similar burial custom to that carried out by the aborigines of south-eastern Arnhem Land and might well be the source from which the Arnhem Land custom originated.

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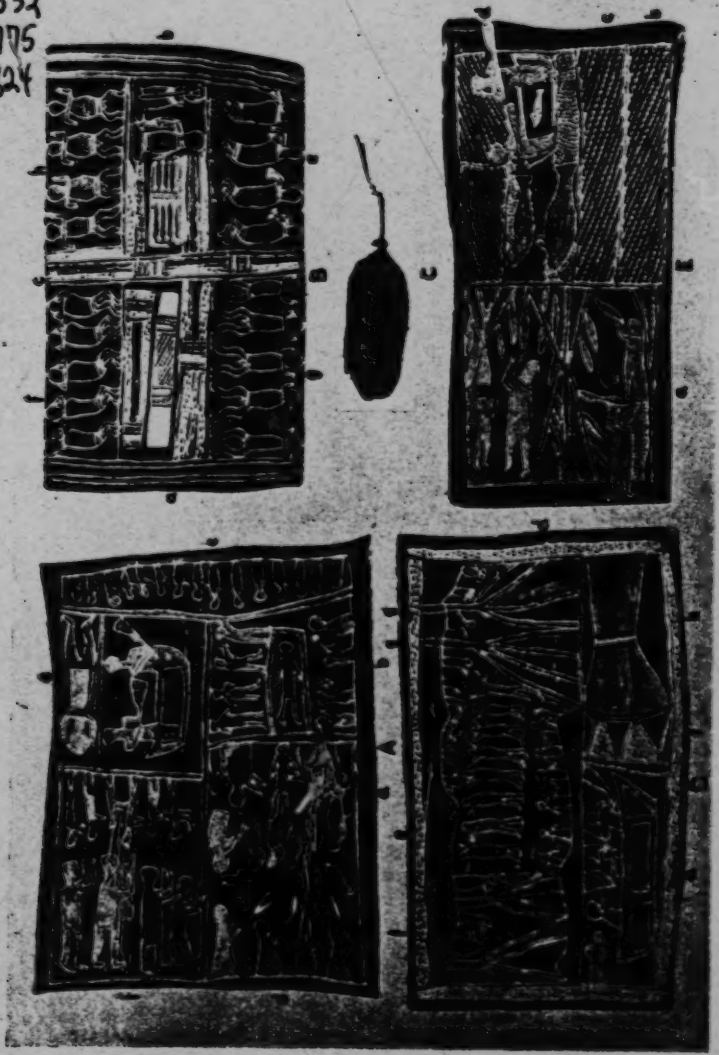

PLATE 100. Bark paintings, Yirrkalla

A, E Journey of jirija dead B Final stage of burial C Bean of menin vine
D Jirija heaven, Naikuma

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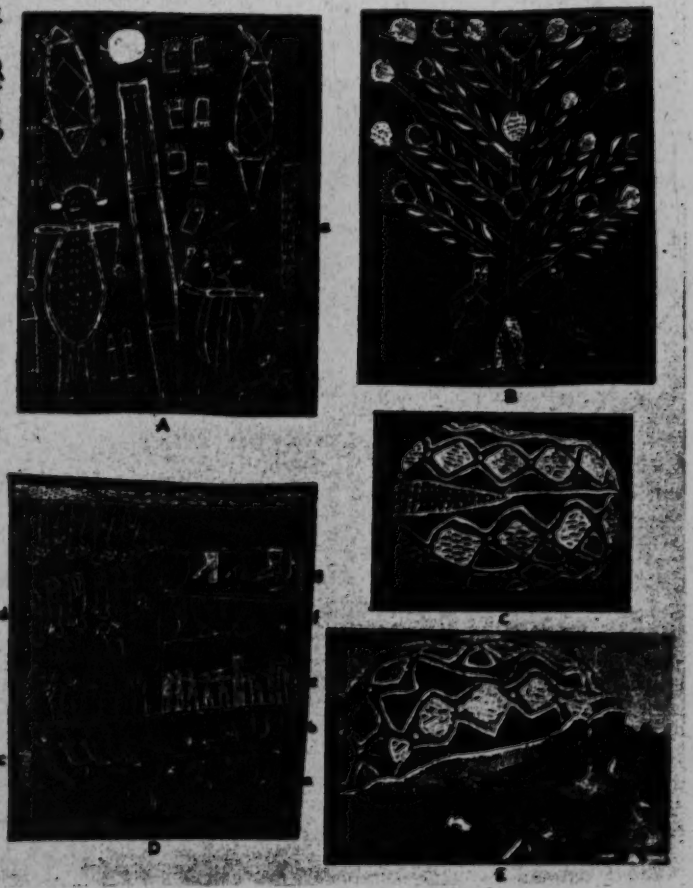

PLATE 101. Bark paintings and painted skull, Yirrkalla

A The dua journey of the dead
B The flight of the morning star
C, E A painted skull
D A burial ceremony

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represent the mouth and teeth of an unknown mythical monster. There was no explanation for the fish designs on the lower right.

Fresh-water Fish, Kwiaurina

Plate 105C, D belongs to a member of the fresh-water fish, *kwiaurina*, totem of the *dua* moiety, whose totemic place is on the Glyde River. The more or less triangular designs, upper left, represent huts, called *anabit*, and the oval designs on the other panels, women's carrying-baskets. The dots on the edge of the baskets symbolize the mythical fresh-water fish, *kwiaurina*, and the cross-hatching inside, smaller fish. As in A, the holes are the 'eyes' of the coffin, and the prongs the teeth and jaws of some unidentified monster.

Unidentified Totem

Plate 103A, B is a coffin of an unidentified totem from Milingimbi. In the upper central panel, A, the bird is an emu, and the pear-shaped designs, yams. Three large fresh-water fish occupy the upper right. Below them is a cat-fish, *kingding* (distinguished by the tentacles from the mouth and the lack of fins), and near the head of the cat-fish, a diamond fish. Three king-fish, *jungalu*, are shown in the lower left panel, and three cat-fish, *kingding*, in the lower central panel.

(c) THE JOURNEY OF THE DEAD SPIRIT AND ITS AFTER-LIFE

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When the log coffin has been placed in its final position and the people have returned to their camps, the spirits of the dead leave their bones, and according to their moiety, travel to their respective 'heaven'. In these 'heavens' there is always pleasant weather and ample food. Everyone is happy, because each spirit on its arrival, whatever its previous disposition, is changed into a person of equable temperament and good health. All day long the spirits may bask in the sun, talking to old friends about their mutual experiences when on earth together, and every evening they perform their favourite ceremonies and sing their favourite songs. Many of the spirit people, however, amuse themselves by going out in their canoes to hunt the sea-creatures for food.[40]

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Although the *dua* and *jiritja* myths of the journey of the spirit to the land of the dead have many points of resemblance, the destinations are different, the *dua* spirits travelling east to Purelko,[41] an island near the sunrise, and the *jiritja* to Nalkuma,[42] a land to the north, where in addition to the usual

40. See *dua* myths, *Turi-turi*, p. 329, and *Balu balu*, p. 332; also *jiritja* myth of *Kultuna*, p. 329, the *Modol* and the dugongs, p. 345.

41. Warner (1937), p. 321, tells an interesting myth of the journey of a mortal man to Purelko.

42. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 54, record that Badu (Mulgrave Island in the Torres Straits) is the *jiritja* home of the dead. My Yirrkalla *jiritja* informants said that Nalkuma, their 'heaven', is to the south. It would appear, however, from the myth associated with the carved figure of *findjaual* (Pl. 139), 85), p. 44, that the *jiritja* groups at Arnhem Bay have a different 'heaven' from that of the aborigines of Yirrkalla.

[184]

[text continues on p. 325]

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aboriginal foods there are many coco-nut trees and much tobacco.[43] These exotic foods do not exist in the *dua* heaven.

(i) *The Journey of the Dua Spirits of the Dead*

As soon as the mourners have left the final burial ground, the *dua* spirit leaves his bones, and entering a bark canoe, is paddled by a *Mokoi*, the first man who died, to Junundi, a jungle on the western shores of Melville Bay. At Junundi he meets a number of other spirits called together for the occasion by the two *Mokoi*, *Wʻulawait* and *Bunbulama*.[44] The new spirit and the *Mokoi* dance all night, carrying in their hands the jungle-flower, *wakoro-nani*, collected by the woman, *Bunbulama*. When morning comes the spirit of the dead man and his ghostly boatman leave for Dambalia, accompanied by a number of dolphins.[45]

The boatman and his companion spend the next night at Dambalia (Bremer Island), performing ceremonies and dancing. This time they carry in their hands the red flower of a yam called *mawoka*.[46] Next morning the spirits start on the last stage of the journey for the distant isle of Purelko. After paddling for many days toward the sunrise and the place where the morning star, *barnumbir*, rises above the horizon, the two boatmen, accompanied by many dolphins, reach their destination. As they land and walk along a path a masked plover, *berrk-berrk* (an onomatopoeic name), which has been watching for their arrival, rises from the ground with a shrill call, a call which tells the inhabitants of Purelko of the arrival of a new spirit. The leader of Purelko, *Jaualin-wuna*, a man with a painted penis, meets and welcomes the new arrival and offers him wives and food.

After the new spirit has met his wives, established his camp and satisfied his hunger, he is welcomed by many of his old friends. Later, when walking through the trees, he surprises two women who are gathering food. The women run quickly to their camp, distinguished by the smoke rising from the many cooking fires, and tell the men of Purelko that they have just seen a new spirit. The men form themselves into a line, spears in hand, and wait. When the dead man sees them, he endeavours to distract their attention by dancing first the brolga dance, then the moon-fish dance. But the spirit men of Purelko quietly wait until the visitor has finished his dances before they cast their spears into his body, one

43. The aborigines believe that the coco-nuts, lengths of bamboos and occasionally canoes (see engraved pipe, Fig. 63B) which are cast up on the Yirrkalla beaches during the northerly, *lungurama*, winds are sent to them by the spirits of Nalkuma. The *lungurama* winds (see winds, p. 133) which originate at Nalkuma are also a gift from the spirits of the dead. [823 824]

44. See myth of *Wʻulawait* and *Bunbulama*, p. 286.

45. Warner (1937), p. 366, records that the porpoises (dolphins) take the spirits of the *dua* Milingimbi men to Purelko. At Yirrkalla, the dolphins carry only the spirits of the *dua* children to Purelko. [825]

46. In one account, a ceremonial object made from the yam, *mawoka*, and its flower is taken from Dambalia to Purelko, where it was transformed into the morning star, *barnumbir*. It is not clear whether this flower is carried by every spirit that passes through Dambalia, or whether it was made in creation times, and is now permanently at Purelko.

after another. At first the spears penetrate deeply into his flesh, but after a while it becomes so hard and tough that the spears cannot even pierce the skin.[47] While this is going on, the women sit on the ground and wail in sympathy for the sufferings of the new spirit.

This ordeal over, the men of Purelko take the new spirit to their camp, tell him that he has passed his initiation, teach him many new songs and dances and invite him to join in their ceremonies.

The method of entry of the spirit of a woman is somewhat different. When the masked plover, *berrk-berrk*, announces the arrival of a new spirit and the head man, *Jaualin-wuru*, finds out that it is a woman, he sends a small child along the track which leads from the beach to Purelko, telling it to find its mother and bring her to him. *Jaualin-wuru* always camps on that track so that no one can reach Purelko without being properly prepared. After *Jaualin-wuru* has met the new arrival and, if necessary, transformed her into a young woman in good health, she stays in his camp until she is pregnant. She is then admitted to Purelko where, after a short and painless period of gestation, she gives birth to her child. The idea behind this belief is that a woman, who must be perfect to enter Purelko, has to show that she is capable of bearing a child.

Two women, *Dunjun-jinn* and *Mitjunn*, live at Purelko and keep the morning star, *barnumbir*, in a string bag, guarding it jealously all the day and most of the night, lest it should escape. A little before dawn, *Jaualin-wuru*, the head man of Purelko, says to the women: 'It's time that you let the morning star out of that bag so that it can visit the *dua* camps on earth both to wake up the men, women and children and to give them the messages from the dead.'

The woman *Mitjunn* objects strongly to this suggestion, because she is afraid that she might lose *barnumbir*, but *Jaualin-wuru* overrules her, and releases the morning star, which is already struggling to get out of the bag to perform its allotted tasks.[48] At first *barnumbir* rests on the top of a tall pandanus tree from which it can see a long distance. This causes the women to cry out in fear that they might lose the star, and to ask that it be returned to them. To pacify the women *Jaualin-wuru* pulls the morning star back again, it is on a string, and puts it in the bag. But, though the women are pleased, *Jaualin-wuru* thinks of the aborigines on earth waiting for their messages. So he opens the bag again and allows *barnumbir* to escape. For a while the morning star dances along the surface of the water, but soon climbs rapidly into the sky. It visits each *dua* place in turn,[49] wakes the aborigines and then gives them messages from their relatives and friends at Purelko. Just as dawn is breaking *Jaualin-wuru* takes hold of the

47. The body is speared when it is taken from the burial platform, p. 312. Warner (1937), p. 113, refers to the same practice. All the male spirits have to pass through this initiation ritual at Purelko. There are different rituals for the women, p. 326. There are no such ordeals in the *mapa* season, Nalkuna.

48. The *dua* moiety of Milingimbi have a similar belief. Myth, p. 220.

49. See p. 327 for the list of *dua* localities.

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string, pulls in the star and, placing it in the carrying-bag, gives it to the women who guard it until the next morning.

One bark painting, Pl. 99.A, illustrates the *dua* journey of the dead; another, Pl. 101B, the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*, from Purelko.[50]

The lower part of the right-hand panel, *a*, of Pl. 99.A shows the dead spirit arriving at Junundi, on the western shores of Melville Bay, after he has been ferried across by his ghostly boatman. The dead man is in the stern. The upper part of the cross-hatching indicates the sea; the lower, the shore. The upper part, *b*, of the right-hand panel deals with the ceremony held by the *Mokoi* at Junundi, Melville Bay. On the right are two performers, each holding in their hands the red jungle-flower, *wakoro-nani*. A third man is blowing the drone tube, another beating the music sticks together, while three men, with their hands upraised, are chanting the songs.

In the lower part of the central panel, *c*, the dead man and his companion have crossed the sea, indicated by the vertical cross-hatched band *g*, and landed at Dambalia. Two of the *Mokoi* (*d*, upper central panel) are holding in their hands the flower of the yam, *mawoka*; others are either blowing the drone tube, beating the music sticks or singing.

The left-hand panel, *e*, pictures the arrival at Purelko. The tree-like design, panel *f*, is the morning star, *barnumbir*.[51] On the right-hand edge are two men, one blowing the drone tube, the other beating the music sticks. The birds on the upper and lower edge are the plovers, *perrk-berrk*, which announced the arrival of the new spirit and the small figure at the bottom, a child, who also saw his arrival. The new spirit is in the extreme lower left. Next to him is *Junalin-wuna*, and in the upper left, a man who is singing. The vertical cross-hatched band, *h*, is the sea between Dambalia and Purelko.

Plate 101B deals with the flight of the *dua* morning star, *barnumbir*. This painting has a dual meaning. In the first place, it represents the yam, *mawoka*, apparently a climbing plant, the flower of which is used by the *Mokoi* and the new spirit in the ceremonies at Dambalia. The design at the base is the yam, *mawoka*; the two ovals on the trunk, the fruit, *bukulita*; and the designs on the end of each branch, the blossoms. The swellings on some of the branches indicate where the creeper has twined itself round a tree.

The meaning of the painting is very different in the myth of the morning-star, *barnumbir*. The design at the base is the carrying-bag in which the morning star is imprisoned by the two women, *Dunjun-jinu* and *Mitjuna*, standing either side. The women are objecting to the order from *Junalin-wuna* that the morning star must be released. Each of the blossoms represents a locality.[52]

Starting from the lowest blossom on the left, and reading in a clockwise direction, the localities are:

50. Warner (1937), p. 527, records that *Barnumbir* only visits *dua* localities.
51. See bark painting of morning star, Pl. 101A, in Milingimbi myth.
52. Although I did not specifically inquire, the evidence suggests that each of these localities belongs to either a *dua* clan, *mala*, or language group, *mata*.

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1. North of Arnhem Bay
2. South of Arnhem Bay
3. Elcho Island
4. South of Rocky Beach, south of Yirrkalla
5. Dambalia (Bremer Island)
6. Wessel Islands
7. A small unidentified island in Buckingham Bay
8. English Company Islands, near Cape Wilberforce
9. Buckingham Bay, south side
10. Blue Mud Bay
11. Northern Blue Mud Bay
12. West Blue Mud Bay
13. Koolatong River
14. Between Caledon and Blue Mud Bays
15. Caledon Bay
16. Mt Saunders, between Port Bradshaw and Caledon Bay
17. Jelangkara, near Port Bradshaw
18. Port Bradshaw

I also collected a painting and myth from the Milingimbi area, which dealt with the Djiraia, the *dua* home of the dead (analagous to Purelko), and the morning star, *barnumbir*. Except for different names and locality, the beliefs are essentially the same. This painting indicates that the *dua* moiety of north-eastern Arnhem Land have more than one 'heaven'.

[776]

Djiraia, the home of the dead and the morning star, is situated on a rocky island somewhere east of the English Company Islands (Fig. 1). Two spirit men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnurunu*, are in charge. When a member of the tribes who live adjacent to Milingimbi dies, no matter where he is, his spirit, after the burial ceremonies are completed, goes straight to Djiraia.[33] As the spirit approaches the shore two masked plovers announce his arrival. The spirits of the dead, the *Mokoi*, then stand on the shore to welcome him.

If a man or woman has been evil, malicious or bad-tempered, he is changed into a person of good nature before he enters the spirit land, because all must be happy and at peace with each other. Also, should the spirit be aged, infirm or sick, he is made young and healthy again, for in that country all must be well. In Djiraia there is no want, no hardships and no quarrels. There is an abundance of food everywhere, fish in the swamps and the seas, and kangaroos, emus and other game in the forest. It is never cold, so that everyone, being young and transformed into a good person, is happy. The days are spent in hunting and eating, and the evenings in song and ceremony.

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The morning star, *barnumbir*,[34] is kept in a cave under the care of two women, who sleep all day and most of the night. But just before dawn these women wake up and tell the two men, *Jumundik* and *Dalnurunu*, that it is time they stopped their singing and let the morning star out of the cave to wake up mankind, otherwise they will sleep all day long. When *barnumbir* is first released it dances up and down on the surface of the sea. It then climbs up a tall pandanus tree, then flies through the air to visit a number of localities where the aborigines live. When the dawn breaks the women take hold of the string

[825]

33. According to Warner (1937), p. 366, these spirits are carried by the porpoises (dolphins).
34. See Milingimbi myth of morning star, Warner (1937), p. 327.

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attached to *barnumbir*, pull it back and imprison it in the cave until the next morning.[55]

On the lower left of Pl. 101A is *Jumundik*, with his wooden trumpet to the left of him and his two music sticks to the right. On the right is *Dalnuranu*, who, with *Jumundik*, is in charge of Djiraia. His wooden trumpet, *a*, and music sticks are on his right. The footprints are those of the *Mokoi* spirits at Djiraia. There was no explanation for the fish. The white circle on the top of the central design is the morning star, *barnumbir*, and the long rectangle below, the rays of light, called *balai-alba*, which issue from it.

A number of spirit people provide food for the inhabitants of their respective 'heavens'. *Turi-turi* is one of them.[56] 775 776 616 532*

One day *Turi-turi*, an expert fisherman, set out in a bark canoe to hunt for turtles. When he was far out to sea, a heavy storm came up, broke the canoe in halves and drowned *Turi-turi*.

After his death the spirit of *Turi-turi* went to Purelko, where he still spends all of his time catching green turtles for the inhabitants of that spirit land. The *dua Mokoi*, *Balu-balu*, also provide food for their companions at Purelko.[57]

Plate 106A shows the man, *Turi-turi*, paddle in hand, standing in his canoe. To the left is the green turtle he wanted to capture. The white cross-hatching on the lower edge represents the waves which destroyed *Turi-turi's* canoe and finally drowned him. The remainder of the background is the sea.

(ii) *The Journey of the Jiritja Spirits of the Dead*

When, at the completion of the burial ceremonies, the bones of the dead man are placed in the log coffin, the spirit leaves its bones, with which it has been associated since death, and, guided by the call of the jungle-fowl, makes its way to a forest, Gurila, north of Port Bradshaw. There it is met by female *Mokoi* called the *Wulu-wulu*,[58] whose duty it is to assist the spirit of newly-dead to reach the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma. The *Wulu-wulu* takes the new spirit to another *Mokoi*, *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, who first gives him two paddles, then instructs him how to make a special wooden canoe, called *jililbun*,[59] in which both can travel to Nalkuma. When the canoe is finished and the two are ready to set out on their journey, the women, *Wulu-wulu*, give the new spirit two seed pods, *gurung-guru*, of the *menin* vine (*Mucuna gigantea*),[60] which will serve him as a passport to Nalkuma. Any spirit who tries to gain admittance to the land of the dead without this passport is hunted away.

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55. This is similar to the Yirrkalla myth of the morning star, p. 326, except that at Yirrkalla the two women object to the release of the morning star.
56. The myths of *Turi-turi* and the *Balu-balu* are analagous to those of the *jiritja Mokoi* who came to Cape Arnhem in their wooden canoes to capture dugongs for the inhabitants of Nalkuma.
57. See myth of *Balu-balu*, p. 172, associated with a painted paddle, Pl. 144F, F.
58. See myth of carved figure of *Wulu-wulu*, p. 343.
59. In another part of the same myth this canoe is called *lampu*.
60. See Pl. 108C for illustration of these seed pods.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 0117 Murngin 0117

Meanwhile some of the inhabitants of Nalkuma, knowing of the impending arrival of the new spirit, have paddled to Cape Arnhem to capture a dugong so that there will be food for the welcoming ceremony. Others light a grass fire, the smoke of which will guide *Kultana* and his companion to their destination.

The inhabitants of Nalkuma, when they see the canoe in the distance, assemble on the shore to welcome the new arrival. His immediate friends first embrace him, then invite him to take part in the meal of dugong flesh, recently captured at Cape Arnhem. Afterwards they perform with him their favourite dances and songs. After all these activities are over the people of Nalkuma help their new companion to prepare his camp. This activity causes so much dust to rise into the sky that large cumulus clouds are formed.[61] When the aborigines on earth see those clouds they know the spirit of the man whose bones they had recently placed in his log coffin has reached Nalkuma, and that their period of mourning is over.

Three bark paintings deal with the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma.

Plate 100D depicts the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. In panel *a* are three spirit men in the canoe, *Lampu*. Reading from the left, they are, *Deiluru*, *Urumula* and *Teri-teri*, all of whom are on their way from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem to spear dugongs. In the upper left of the same panel and the lower right of panel *d* is *Kultana*, the head man of Nalkuma, smoking a pipe, for tobacco has always been available in Nalkuma. The long symbol on panel *b* is the cumulus cloud which forms on the top of the dust cloud caused by the spirits when preparing the camp. The triangular symbols *c*, on the left of the same panel, are the small clouds which are present after the cumulus has disintegrated.

Panel *e*, on the top of the painting, refers to the happenings at Nalkuma on the arrival of the new spirits. At *f*, on the upper left, is one of the new spirits being embraced by an old friend, and the nine figures along the upper edge are other spirits waiting to be welcomed. On the opposite edge of the same panel are a number of *Mokoi* ready to take part in the welcoming ceremony. The central line of eight figures are *Mokoi* swimming in the sea. The trees, *g*, *g*, *g*, are *kanari* (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) and the dark mark in the branches is the dense shade which this tree, with its large leaves, casts on the ground.

On Pl. 100A, panels *a*, *b* and *c* refer to the burial rituals. These have already been described on p. 314. Panels *d* and *e* deal with the journey of the dead to Nalkuma, and *f* to their reception at that place. On the left-hand edge of panel *d* are four of the female *Wulu-wulu* who live in the Gurila jungle of Port Bradshaw. They are giving the seed pods of the *mruin* vine, *gurung-guru*, to the new spirit, centre. To the right are the two jungle-fowls whose call guided him to this locality.

In the upper right, panel *e*, the new spirit is being paddled to Nalkuma by the chief *Mokoi*, *Kultana*. A number of inhabitants of the home of the dead,

61. Cumulus clouds often form on the top of the smoke of bush-fires. Clouds of dust could cause the same phenomenon.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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panel *f*, are welcoming the new spirit to his future home. In the upper part of *e* the new spirit is resting quietly in his camp after the ceremony is over.

Plate 100E also deals with the journey of the *jiritja* dead to Nalkuma.

On the upper left of panel *a*, the new spirit is asking the *Wulu-wulu* for the seed pods, *gurung-guru*, of the *menin* vine (Pl. 100C), so that he can enter Nalkuma. Three female *Mokoi*, the *Wulu-wulu*,[62] are picking the seed pods to give to him. The black bird is the jungle-fowl whose call has guided the new spirit to Gurila jungle. At *d*, the new spirit and the boatman, *Kultana*, are in the *Mokoi* canoe, *Lampu*, while in the bottom is a dugong they have captured and are taking with them to Nalkuma. To the left of the canoe are two dugongs, the white cross-hatching at the tail of the lower, and above the upper one, representing their wake. Panel *b* is the sandy shore at Port Bradshaw, *c* the shallow water, and *d* the open sea.

(2) The Totemic Places and Creatures of Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem

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In north-eastern Arnhem Land, where strong patrilineal clans or *mala* have the complete ownership of certain areas, the totemic places in those clan territories belong exclusively to the moiety of the aborigines who own the land. To show the richness of the mythology associated with one particular area, but which is typical of others, I have grouped all the art objects relating to the *jiritja* myths of Port Bradshaw and Cape Arnhem in one section.

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The area around Cape Arnhem, and, so far as I could ascertain, within the harbour of Port Bradshaw, having been created by a number of *jiritja* mythical men and creatures, is owned today by *jiritja* men of the *gumaitj mala* or language group. Although the *dua* ancestors, *Djunkgao* and *Madalait*, landed on Aparina Island, at the entrance of Port Bradshaw,[63] they do not appear to have entered the harbour, but established their camp at Jelangbara, a few miles north of its entrance. Jelangbara is the property of the *dua* men of the *rirdjingu mala*.

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Even though most of the *jiritja* totemic beings of Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw were harmless marine creatures, several of them are still feared. For instance, in a group of submerged rocks at Daliwa, between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, lives the serpent, *bilumbira*.[64] Should aborigines paddle too near his home, *bilumbira* will rise to the surface and with his long teeth, tear them and their canoe to pieces. The dugong, *merinjunga*,[65] at Nangata, south of Cape Arnhem, blows up smoke and fire to destroy his enemies, while the hawksbill turtle, *kounyaradji*,[66] creates heavy seas which drown those who intrude on his domain. Within Port Bradshaw are two other dangerous creatures, the devil-ray, *mulun*, and the trepang, *teripi*. The former creates huge waves, and the latter spirits up fountains of water to destroy any trespassers.

62. See carved figure, Pl. 100c.
63. See myth of *Djunkgao* and the *Baijini*, p. 273.
64. See myth of *bilumbira*, p. 351.
65. See myth of dugong, p. 383.
66. See myth of turtle, p. 117.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

an axe he used in the construction of his house. The six vertical lines in panel *a* are the posts of the house, made from local timber, and the cross-hatching between them, walls of plaited bamboo. The transverse panels *b*, *b*, are rafters of the roof (rectangles *c*, *c*) which were thatched with the leaves of an unidentified palm.

The three rectangles at *d* are wells the *Baijini* men dug, and the footmarks in the central vertical panel, those made by the men during their house-building. The *Baijini* made their fire outside the house. Their pipes were similar to those used by Europeans.[79]

Spirit People

The spirit people, or *Mokoi* (the *dua* moiety call them *Wuna*) all appear to have been living people. At the present time, they pay occasional visits to the land of the living, where they spend most of their time in the jungles. Although the aborigines are somewhat afraid of the *Mokoi*, as indeed the *Mokoi* are of human beings,[80] I did not personally collect any evidence that they were ill-disposed toward living people. Warner,[81] however, refers to their malignant nature. We know little about the *Mokoi* and hope that later research will reveal more fully their place in the life and beliefs of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land.

The Mokoi, Rangi-rangi and Kultana, of Port Bradshaw

During creation times two men, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*,[82] both of them expert fishermen, came to Port Bradshaw to spear dugong. The day was so windy that the spray from the waves beating against the sides of the canoe rose into the sky, causing heavy thunder-clouds to form and rain to fall. This originated the first wet season. As soon as this happened the stingrays, heavily pregnant, travelled to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young among the roots of the trees. Since that time the young stingrays are always born among the roots of the mangroves at the beginning of the wet season.

The man, *Kultana*, is now one of the *Mokoi* who sometimes lives at Port Bradshaw. It is his duty to assist the spirits of the dead during their journey from earth to the *pirrija* heaven, Nalkuna (p. 331).

Plate 109E, F, is the obverse and reverse sides of a painted paddle.

On panel *a* are the two men, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*, in their canoe, which has since been transformed into a paper-bark tree. The cross-hatching below the canoe symbolizes the rough seas and that above the canoe, the clouds created by the spray from the waves. On panel *b* is the dugong, *bahenkmeri*, with a dugong spear on either side. In panel *c* the two rain-clouds were created by the spray from the sides of the canoe. These same clouds are also painted in panel *c*.

79. See painted pipe, Pl. 128A.
80. See myths of *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*, p. 340, and *Birikiri*, p. 340.
81. Warner (1937), p. 73.
82. *Kultana* is now the head man of the *pirrija* heaven, Nalkuna, p. 329.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

'Make my eyesight keen so that I can see the flight of the bees.'

This ritual enabled the hunter to see the bees and to follow their flight more easily,[85] because of *Borolo-borolo's* ability to do so during mythical times. Even though, at the present time, the wooden penis is no longer in its totemic place, the aborigines still visit the same spot and repeat the formula, which they say still makes their eyesight much clearer.[86]

Borolo-borolo's wife, *Mainbuno*, was also expert in locating the wild yam, *jakwa*, and every place in which she once dug for them is known. Today, the women visit these places and, putting their digging sticks on the spot where *Mainbuno* had dug previously, say, 'Brr' in a low voice. After that, they find many *jakwa* yams.

Two paintings, a painted wooden penis and a bark figure (not published) illustrate the myth.

On Pl. 110A is *Borolo-borolo* walking through the grass, with his hand shielding his eyes from the sun as he watches the flight of a wild bee towards its hive. On the left is an emu and a wallaby which ran away when they saw *Borolo-borolo*, and on the right the three yams, *jakwa*, which *Borolo-borolo's* wife, *Mainbuno*, had created. The tubers are at the top of the painting and their foliage is at the bottom.

Plate 110C is a duplicate of the wooden penis of *Borolo-borolo* which the aborigines made for me and on which they painted the design of the yam, *jakwa*.

Plate 110D[87] pictures *Borolo-borolo* with his two wives, *Mainbuno* and *Wurungil*.[88] *Borolo-borolo* is setting out to hunt kangaroos and emus and his wives to collect *jiritja* honey, the female, *barangit*, which burns the mouth, and the male, *kamo*, a pleasant-tasting honey. *Mainbuno* is in the upper position, and *Wurungil* in the lower. Below the family is a forest of stringy-bark trees (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*). The cross-hatched panels on the right represent the wild honey collected by the women, the three dark-coloured areas being *barangit* and the light-coloured ones *kamo*.

Spirit People

Five bark paintings and an engraved paddle deal with the spirit people, the *Mokoi*, some of whom travel regularly from Nalkuna, the *jiritja* heaven, to their totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem[89] so that they can spear dugongs, turtles and fish to provide the inhabitants of Nalkuna with food. Two others, the woman *Wulu-wulu* and the man *Kultana*, visit Port Bradshaw so

85. The method of locating the hives is to watch the direction of the flight of the bees, an exacting task, for the insects are little larger than the common house fly.

86. This is, to some degree, an increase centre. The penis of *Borolo-borolo* is also an example of the care that must be taken before attaching an erotic significance to any representation of the sex organ.

87. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

88. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 41, Pl. 3A, figure and describe a wooden trumpet or drone tube associated with *Borolo-borolo* and the yams.

89. Map, Fig. 57.

[text continues on p. 345]

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Ol17 Muragia Ol17

that they can help the spirits of the newly dead on their journey to Nalkuma, *Wulu-wulu* giving them the bean of the *menin* tree,[90] a passport into the *jiritja* heaven, and *Kultana* assisting to paddle them across the sea to their future home.[91]

The Mokoi and the Turtle Hunt

Plate 110E is the story of a turtle hunt by some of the *Mokoi* who had paddled in a wooden canoe from Nalkuma to Cape Arnhem, and the incidents connected with the hunt.

The three *Mokoi* paddled through rough water (four cross-hatched rectangles, *a*, on left of right-hand panel) to reach a group of rocks (squares with diagonal lines at *b*) so that they could spear the turtles living among those rocks. On their way the spirit-men saw a devil-ray, *b* (*Daemonata alfredi*).[92] The large gills are shown as slits, and the fat within the body as a crescent. In the left panel are dugongs, *merinjunga*, feeding on the submarine grass, *gumatu*. The fish are *tinimbu*, queen fish, and squares with diagonal lines, rocks in the sea frequented by the turtles, upper edge.

The Mokoi and the Dugong, Merinjunga

Two mythical dugongs, *merinjunga* (*Dugong australis*), which once lived in the sea at Cape Arnhem were continuously being pursued by the *Mokoi* who came from the *jiritja* heaven, Nalkuma. The *Mokoi*, however, were not always successful because, just as they were about to spear the creatures, a storm would develop and allow the dugongs to escape.[93] Later the canoe was transformed into a large rock on the sea coast between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw, and the dugongs into a rock in the water near by. The place of the stingray, which also appears in the painting, is a hole in the ground. When travelling in their canoes the aborigines will not go near the totemic place of the dugong, for if they did the dugongs would send up so much smoke and fire that they would be destroyed.

On the land, near this totemic place, is a paper-bark tree, once a dugong, which resembles that creature in appearance, and near by is a termite mound also a transformed dugong. When the aborigines wish to increase the supply of dugongs at a particular locality they take a branch from the dugong tree and a piece of earth from the termite mound and throw them both into the fire. When the wood is burnt to ash the men take the heated termite earth from the fire, pound it into dust, mix it with the wood ash and throw the mixture into the sea where the dugongs feed. This dust from the totemic tree and the termite mound will create many dugongs in that locality.[94]

90. Pl. 110E. 91. Myth, p. 331.
92. This huge, cumbersome but harmless sea-creature sometimes reaches a length of fifteen feet and a weight of a ton.
93. Dugongs can only be captured on windless days when the sea is calm.
94. This increase ritual is not unlike that carried out at the increase centre for parrot-fish at Winchelsea Island, p. 84.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

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There are two bark paintings illustrating the dugong hunt at the totemic place of the *Mokoi*, between Cape Arnhem and Port Bradshaw.

Plate 111A shows two *Mokoi* in a canoe hunting four dugongs. The black line between the two lower dugongs is the long dugong spear. The white cross-hatching in this panel indicates the rough seas which allowed the dugongs to escape. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *a* and *c*, are sand-banks near the totemic place of the dugongs and *b* is a mythical stingray. By burying itself in the sand the stingray has clouded the water so much that it has the appearance of smoke, indicated by cross-hatching.

Plate 111D deals with the same totemic place as the previous painting. On the lower right are two *Mokoi* in their canoe, and below them three queen fish, *tinimbu*. In the left-hand panel the four dugongs are being hunted by the *Mokoi* and on the upper right is the upturned canoe of the hunters, now a large rock on the seashore. Cross-hatching, as before, indicates rough seas which prevented the capture of the dugongs.

The Mokoi, Delururu, Rangi-rangi and Kultana

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Two brothers, *Delururu* and *Rangi-rangi*, accompanied by *Kultana*, who carry the spirits of the *jiritja* dead to their heaven, left Nulkuna in their canoe, *Lampu*, and paddled to the totemic place of the *Mokoi* at Cape Arnhem to spear dugongs. They had captured several and were resting on the beach when they saw a mortal man searching for turtle eggs. This gave the party such a fright that they hurried back to their canoe and paddled homeward as quickly as possible.[95]

In the centre of Pl. 111B are three *Mokoi* in their wooden canoe, called *Lampu*,[96] who have just speared a dugong. Reading from the left, their names are *Delururu*, *Rangi-rangi* and *Kultana*. The cross-hatching around the dugong is the rough sea water and the triangular patterns, *a*, the cumulus clouds created by the serpent, *bilumbira*. Above the canoe are five queen fish, *tinimbu*.

The Mokoi, Jambula and Bulanuna

Two *Mokoi*, a father, *Jambula*, and his son, *Bulanuna*, went to sea in their canoe, called *Tamalania*,[97] and speared a hawksbill turtle. This they took to a locality at Cape Arnhem, cooked and ate it. The canoe and the turtle are now parts of the topography of the coast of Cape Arnhem.

At *a*, on the right-hand panel of Pl. 111C, is *Jambula*, left, and his son, *Bulanuna*, returning to land with the turtle they have captured lying in the bottom of the canoe. An octopus and two queen fish are in the same panel. When, in still weather, these queen fish jump out of the water they cause the

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95. This is a myth similar to that of *Birikiri* depicted on the engraved paddle, Fig. 56F.

96. Wooden canoes are *jiritja* and bark canoes *dua*. This conforms to the custom of the aborigines of north-eastern Arnhem Land of placing all modern objects in the *jiritja* society and the ancient ones in the *dua*. The canoes of the spirit people all have special names.

97. The aborigines have personal names for themselves, their dogs and their canoes.

3: Mountford E-S (1948) 1956 OU7 Murngin OU7

The two stingrays, shown in the centre of the rain, are travelling to the mangrove swamps to give birth to their young.[6]

Plate 112A is another painting illustrating the myth of the *bilumbira*. The main features above and below the central line are two large thunderstorms in which three serpents are travelling. The parallel lines of cross-hatching in the four corners of the painting depict the falling rain.

Plate 112B deals with the totemic place of the *bilumbira* on the northern side of Cape Arnhem. In the lower panel are *menin* trees, and at their base four jungle-fowls (*Megapodius reinwardt*) scratching up their mounds.[7] Hanging from the branches or flying through the air are a number of the *bilumbira* serpents. The human figures are *Mokoi*.[8]

The upper panel shows similar trees with jungle-fowl mounds at their base, and birds, presumably jungle-fowls, in the branches. As in the upper panel, there are serpents flying through the air or hanging from the branches.

Plate 112C is an elaboration of the previous painting, the upper and lower right-hand panels referring to the same trees and serpents as those shown on B. In the lower right, at *a*, the two square-topped designs with the serpent entering from the left indicate the submerged rocks at Daliwa, the dry-season home of the *bilumbira*. The upper and lower left-hand panels, *c* and *d*, show additional trees with mounds at their base and, presumably, jungle-fowls in their branches. On the centre left at *b* is a *Mokoi*. The triangular section in the centre of the right-hand side of the painting refers to the swamp lands on the coast adjacent to the totemic place of the *bilumbira*. In the lower section of the triangle are unidentified birds and in the upper section, a *Mokoi* lying down, and near by a group of circles representing some unidentified fruit. More fruits are shown in the circle at *c*.

(3) Animals and Birds

The Hawk-man, Wabulu, and the Butterfly-girl, Bounba

The hawk-man, *Wabulu*,[9] was without a wife. One day when he was feeling particularly lonely he came across a camp of butterfly-people, *Bounba*,[10] sitting under the trees. *Wabulu* was attracted by the eldest sister, resting in a special hut on one side, and made plans to capture her for his wife. Going to a nearby beach, he caught a number of lobsters, called *maitku*, cooked them and, wrapping some of them in paper-bark, returned to the camp of the butterfly-people, and offered them to the eldest sister. As she came forward to take the food

6. Myth, p. 340.

7. The jungle-fowls, by their calls, attract the *jiritja* spirits of the dead to a burst near Port Bradshaw; from there, the spirits set out on their journey to the *jiritja* heaven. Myth, p. 329.

8. These spirit people, *Mokoi*, have a totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem.

9. In another myth the hawk, *wabulu*, is associated with the native cat. See p. 337.

10. According to Warner (1937), p. 424, the butterfly, *burn-bu*, is closely associated with the morning star, *burnumbir*, and lives on the top of it.

The cross-hatching on the back and front of the figure indicates the tunic worn by the woman and the pattern on the legs, the stripes on her short trousers. The central disc is a money bag, held in place by the diagonal strings. The artist has indicated *Jubaru's* long hair by a series of vertical lines.

The Wuruma Man

Plate 136C illustrates a mortuary post, called *wuruma*, which, according to my informants, is similar to those the visiting Macassan trepangers placed on the graves of their dead.[69] Until recently men of the *jiritja* moiety placed similar posts on the graves of their dead. Both Warner and the Berndts[70] describe some of the customs associated with their use.

The Woman, Wurati-laku

A mythical woman, *Wurati-laku*, who once lived on the Amakula River, Groote Eylandt,[71] became dissatisfied with her surroundings and started on a journey round the island. She camped at many places, at the Angoroko River, at Amalipa, at north-western Groote Eylandt, at Wangu-garipa, near Umbakumba, at Algirita, Lake Hubert, making her final camp at Natira, near Central Hill. Each of her camps became extensive outcrops of rocky boulders. *Wurati-laku*, afraid lest men other than her husband might see her, always ran away on their approach, covering herself with a sheet of bark. Until recently the women of Groote Eylandt copied the actions of the mythical woman, *Wurati-laku*. Whenever a strange man approached the camp they ran away, holding around their bodies sheets of hinged bark, called *inukumba*.[72]

Plate 135C, D illustrates the carved figure of *Wurati-laku*, the designs on the body representing those painted on the hinged sheet of bark, *inukumba*, which she always carried. The dots on her head represent the flower, *latulat*, she placed in her hair.

The Spirit Woman, Wulu-wulu

A number of these spirit women, or *Mokoi*, *Wulu-wulu*, live with a male *Mokoi*, *Kultana*, in the Gurila jungle, near Port Bradshaw. The *Wulu-wulu* assist the spirits of the *jiritja* dead on their journey to the *jiritja* 'heaven', Nalkuma,[73] by giving them as a passport the bean of a *menin* vine.

The central line on the carved figure of *Wulu-wulu*, Pl. 135E, is the trunk of the *menin* vine, the diagonals, the branches, and the ovals within the diagonals, the bean, *gurung-guru*,[74] which *Wulu-wulu* gives to the travelling spirits of the dead.

69. See origin of carved figures, p. 416.
70. Warner (1937), p. 451; Berndts (1949), p. 216. 71. See map, Fig. 4.
72. Tindale (1925), p. 71, mentions the strict seclusion of the aboriginal women at Groote Eylandt.
73. Bark painting, Pl. 108B. 74. Pl. 108A.

The designs on the head of *Duwuliana*, Pl. 139B, C, all refer to rain, hail and thunder-clouds. The dots on the face of B are hail-stones, and the cross-hatched panel across the forehead, small clouds. On the side of the head, Pl. 139C, the cross-hatched panels indicate falling rain, and the white crown, the tops of cumulus clouds.

The Baijini Man, Tankupou

Plate 139F, G pictures the carved head of a *Baijini* man, *Tankupou*, who once lived at Port Bradshaw.[83] The black rectangle on the forehead, Pl. 139F, is the pillow of *Tankupou*, and the cross-hatched panel beneath, the pillow-slip. The designs on Pl. 139G all refer to the cotton goods owned by the *Baijini*, and the vertical lines on the neck to the posts of the *Baijini* house.

The Baijini Man, Gurumuluna

Gurumuluna was the head man of the *Baijini* visitors to Port Bradshaw. He is now included in the pantheon of mythical beings who created the topography of Port Bradshaw.

Plate 140A, B, C pictures the carved head of *Gurumuluna*. The designs on the forehead, Pl. 140B, indicate a distinguishing badge which, according to my informants, is similar to that worn by a ship's captain. The two triangles in front of the ear, Pl. 140C, are the cotton sheets for *Gurumuluna's* bed, and the cross-hatched rectangle in the same position on Pl. 140A, his pillow. The cross-hatched triangles on the top of the head and behind the ears represent the roof of the house of the *Baijini*, which was constructed of bamboo rafters and palm-tree thatch. The parallel vertical lines on the neck refer to the upright posts of the house.

The Spirit Man, Jindjaraui

The spirit man, *Jindjaraui*, lives on the shores of a swamp west of Arnhem Bay. This *Mokoi* carries a long steel knife in his hair which, when he strikes it, gives off a clear bell-like note. This sound guides the *jiritja* spirits of the dead belonging to the Arnhem Bay area to *Jindjaraui's* camp, one of the *jiritja* 'heavens'.[84]

Plate 139J, K illustrates the carved head of the *Mokoi*, *Jindjaraui*. The dark-coloured triangle above the ear on Pl. 139K is the blade of the steel knife the *Mokoi* carries in his hair and the cross-hatched rectangle below, its handle. The cross-hatching on either side of the knife indicates clouds and the dots on the top

83. For more complete details of the *Baijini* myth, see p. 333.

84. Berndt (1948), p. 94, claims that the spirits of the *jiritja* dead from Yirrkalla go to Badu (Mulgrave Island) in the Torres Straits. He, however, refers to fifteen other names for the *jiritja* heaven. Although my *jiritja* informants from Yirrkalla stated emphatically that their spirits went to Naltuma (p. 331), not to Badu, and I did not obtain such a large number of designations for the *jiritja* home of the dead as did Berndt, the myth associated with *Jindjaraui* indicates that there is more than one *jiritja* heaven. The *dua* moiety at Yirrkalla, on the other hand, refer to only one heaven, i.e. Purelko (myth, p. 325), although the *dua* moiety of Milingimbi call their land of the dead Djirala.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OII7 Murngin OII7

*532 [767] *Bunbulama* and her brother, *W'uluwait*. Bark figures are also used in the burial ceremonies, where they are used to represent children. They are placed beside the corpse so that it will not be lonely.

*532 778 *773 The figures of *Bunbulama* and *W'uluwait* have leaves and rushes stuck in the head for hair. In the bark painting, Pl. 94C, these represent the swamp grass in the rain-making bundles. Except for this, all the bark figures in my collection were similar in appearance. For that reason the figures of *Bunbulama* and *W'uluwait* only are illustrated.

The myths associated with the bark painting, Pl. 94C, the carved figure, Pl. 133A, B, and the bark figures, Fig. 65C, D, suggest that the myth of the *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *W'uluwait* covers two different activities. In the myth of the bark painting and the carved figure, the activities of the two *Mokoi* centre on rain-making. In the myth of the bark figure their chief function is to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead on their journey from earth to their heaven, Purelku.

*773 776 The *Mokoi*, *Bunbulama* and her brother *W'uluwait*, live in a jungle called Mumulara, on the western shores of Melville Bay. In the early days *W'uluwait* was a good hunter of turtles. One day, when out in his canoe, he sighted a particularly large *dua* turtle floating on the water, but in spite of all his care he could not get close enough to spear it. Disappointed, *W'uluwait* returned and told *Bunbulama* about his bad luck. She persuaded him not to be worried about the loss of the turtle because, as there was always plenty of food on the sea coast and in the surrounding jungle, she would be able to collect sufficient food for them both. From then until now the woman, *Bunbulama*, has provided the food.

● [775 616] At the present time, however, it is the duty of these two *Mokoi* to entertain the *dua* spirits of the dead during the first evening of their journey to the *dua* heaven, Purelku. When it becomes dark the woman, *Bunbulama*, returning from the jungle with a bundle of red blossoms called *banamin*,[88] asks her brother to blow his drone tube, so that the travelling spirits will find *Bunbulama's* camp. When they arrive, everyone spends the hours of darkness in dance and ceremony, carrying in their hands the flowers gathered by *Bunbulama*.[89] As daylight approaches, the *dua* spirits of the dead depart on the next stage of their journey to Purelku, via Dambalia (Bremer Island), and the brother and sister go back into the dense jungle so that none of the aborigines can see them.

[*532] Figure 65C illustrates the bark figure of the woman, *Bunbulama*; Fig. 65D, her brother *W'uluwait*. Both figures have grass stuck in their head and a projection from the chin which represents a beard.[90]

88. In another myth, this flower is called *wakwa-mani*, p. 327.
89. See myth of journey of the *dua* dead, p. 325.
90. My informants stated that the woman, *Bunbulama*, wore a beard, similar to that of her brother. This beard, however, is not shown on the bark painting of these two people, Pl. 94B.

4: Berndt & Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1948
O117 Murngin O117

Full length, 33·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 6·25 inches; diameter of head, 5·25 inches; width at shoulders, 4·5 inches.

Plate I, Figure 6. The final figure of this group is a representation of a *'Banaitja* female. Very little of these women is mentioned in the sacred mythology, but songs do refer to sisters of *'Banaitja*. This figure is in the likeness of *'Laintjuy's* daughter at a place called *'Gu:ɔldʒi* in the *'Dalwoŋu* country. Her special name is *'Barama*, while her sacred name is *'Bibuana*. She is also called *'Mundamunda*, from her body markings, representing bubbles rising to the surface of fresh water, and *'Mundalwaltun*, which refers to barramundi scales arising from the water.[23] This woman, unlike her father *'Laintjuy*, always hides in the water and never emerges.

The figure is rather carelessly carved, and the designs are coloured yellow and white on a red-ochred background, in the conventional manner. Both back and front of this figure are patterned in the sacred *'Dalwoŋu* clan design, representing bubbles arising from the water, and water-weed spreading across the surface of the water. The pupils of the eyes are painted black; while a yellow band across the forehead, with vertical white and red lines, is a headband, and other lines represent facial markings in yellow and white.

Artist: *'Li:ŋgo'ray*, as above.

Full length, 29·5 inches; length from top of head to shoulders, 7·25 inches; diameter of head, 5 inches; width across shoulders, 5·5 inches.

GROUP 2

The Figures and Their Background.

Male and female *'Kultana*, each known by a variety of names,[24] are associated with the *'jiritja* conception of the Land of Spirits, to which human beings of this moiety must go after death. The spirits of deceased *'du:a* moiety men and women, irrespective of clan, travel to the fabulous country of *Bo'ralku*, the original home of the Great Ancestral Beings, known as the *'Dʒaygɔwɔl*, who themselves brought into being the predecessors of the present aborigines.[25] Consistent with their less conservative ideas, the *'jiritja* home of the dead is located at *'Ba:du* (or Badu; i.e. Badu Island in the Torres Strait Islands group). It is there, in a land of running spring water, coconut palms, bread fruit, rice and light-skinned people who cut timber and live in stilted houses, that the spirit is said to find eventual repose.

[23] For *'Banaitja* is associated with the barramundi fish.

[24] The man is called also *'Ranjiranji*, *'Dʒ:wumba*, *'Ma:ldʒidʒi*, *'Wu:rimila*, *'Li:abalgulk*, *'Gɔ:ŋgaraldʒuŋ*, *'Dʒu:pinga:ma*, *'Kauwu:ŋɔ*, *'Dʒalba:ru*, *'Kundʒɔrɔl*, etc., as well as a number of subsidiary names referring to particular incidents in his existence, e.g. *'Da:ga:dʒi:njahwu:l* (looking around for stingray in the mangroves), *'Jiribuma* (scratching himself after being bitten by mosquitoes), *'Dʒi:wɔ:luŋɔ:rɔrɔ* (coming out into the shallow water of a mangrove swamp, looking for stingray), etc., etc. His wife is also known as *'Wulciwuli*, *'Dambɔrama*, *Munanditja*, *'Kɔ:guɔ:naiguu*, *'Lowrilawri*, *'Mu:rhaldʒa*, *'Kɔ:ghilji'nayɔ*, *'Kuruŋgur*, *'Mahwuŋgitj*, *'Meiwada*, *'Dibui:a*, *'Mara:waldʒiyani* and *'Murandilyɔ*, etc.

[25] *'Dʒaygɔwɔl* is associated with the concept of the Fertility Mother, which will be discussed in detail later.

'*Kultana* belongs to the '*Gumaitf'mata* (language) group near Port Bradshaw, but this spirit and his wife seem to have other spheres of influence outside their home territory. For example, '*Kultana* also lives on an island called '*Mɔ:dilya*, north of the Wessells, and lights large fires of grass and "rubbish" to attract spirits of the dead on their way to '*Ba:du*. The male '*Kultana*, when he is not supervising the journeying spirits, hunts for stingray in the shallow waters of the mangrove swamps, and scratches his mosquito bites; while his wife gathers wood, collects jungle-fowl eggs, and generally spends her time in the jungles fringing the beach. There are no actual ceremonies associated with these '*Kultana*, although there is some secular mortuary dancing; but there are both sacred and camp songs related to their adventures and general behaviour.

'*Murɔrɯ:ma* is the "Turtle" Man from Bremer Island (at one time called Melville Island), and is associated with '*du:a* '*Ri:rɔdʒiyu* '*mata* secular and sacred life; he, his wives and his sons, '*Dayɔdʒi:ɔna* and '*W'ural'ural*, are immortalized particularly in an elaborate song cycle sung in the camp, while '*Murɔrɯ:ma* himself plays only a subsidiary part in the sacred songs. However, to the '*Ri:rɔdʒiyu* speaking group he is an important being, connected with the principal physical features of their country, which is localized around Yirrkalla. The myth itself deals with his turtle hunting, the murder of his '*jiritfa* '*W'ɔnguri* wife (he had other wives, belonging to the '*Lum'mɔri*, '*Warɔm'ɔri* and '*Gumaitf* speaking clans), and consequent feuds arising from this killing. His wife was killed because she wished to have nothing to do with her husband, refused his sexual attentions, and wanted to return to her own country. He killed her by inserting his knife in her vagina, and slitting her upwards to the throat. A revenge expedition on the part of the dead wife's family succeeded in killing '*Murɔrɯ:ma* at Melville Bay, on the mainland.

'*Murɔrɯ:ma's* two sons, who were living at Bremer Island, came with their friends to the point of land opposite Bremer, near Yirrkalla; there they saw the spirit of '*Murɔrɯ:ma*, but believing him to be a human being they were glad, as they had not heard of his death. Coming close to him, they saw him disappear; and looking out to sea they saw a big rock which they knew must be his spirit. They spoke among themselves, saying that they would avenge his death. The rest of the myth concerns several killings and other details too numerous to present here.

These carved figures, whether they be the realistic or conventionalized (i.e. as the "post" figure, Plate I, Figure 4) representations, are used as '*rayga* objects, in much the same way as are the sacred (*'maraiin*) painted and feathered-string-decorated poles of '*Dzaygɯl*, '*Laintfuy*, '*Banaitfa*, '*Wanwɔlak* etc. They are kept in a store-house near the ritual dancing ground and shown to initiated men.[36] The original artist who has made the figure enters the hut; outside, the postulants sit or stand with averted heads. The song man begins to beat his sticks, and the others are led up to look upon the sacred object. Finally, when the singing is completed, the

[36] Those who have gone through a series of '*maraiin* ceremonies, but may not yet have been admitted to the viewing of certain sacred '*rayga*.

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OII7 Murngin OII7

753 fire, and, as the smoke ascended, he asked it to carry this coughing
754 sickness to these people.

754 In this aboriginal community are men known as Gulung, or
756 "Marrngit," who exercise magic in a curative or preventive way. Their chief function is to discover and combat the sinister purposes of the Ragalk, or of evil spirits. Neither the Ragalk nor the Marrngit occupy a position apart from the ordinary life of the people, nor do they exercise any special functions in the ceremonial life of the tribe.

628 Magic is also believed to operate through an article known
765 as "Maiyabala." When a man dies or is killed, a scrap of one of
778 his bones, or a piece of one of his weapons or utensils, is given by one of his near relatives to each of his friends. This article is known as a "Maiyabala," and carries with it this important significance. Every man accepting the "Maiyabala" places himself under the obligation of doing his best to avenge the death of the deceased. I have known men who have allowed themselves to be persuaded into accepting the "Maiyabala," to be later deeply troubled when they have considered the probable consequences of their action. There is no way of escaping the obligation, and these men have thus made themselves party to a serious quarrel which probably does not concern them.

[677] When a man, in fulfilment of this obligation, kills another, he
765 is usually relieved from personal responsibility in the matter, the
778 magical property of the "Maiyabala," by directing the man's spear and giving strength to his throw, being regarded as the actual cause of the killing. The Maiyabala is also worn as a charm, and is believed to assist the wearer in fighting or in the pursuit of game, the idea being that the spirit of the dead man reinforces and assists that of the wearer of this relic.

775 Closely allied to the above are some of the beliefs concerning the "Mali," or lesser spirits, of men who have been killed. When a man has killed another it is believed that the "Mali" of the slain seeks to enter the person of the slayer, the idea here being that, by overcoming the man's body, the victor has also overcome his spirit, which now seeks to serve its new master. Numbers of men of my acquaintance claim to have passed through this experience.

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

The entrance of the "Mali" is said to produce a kind of trance, and to be accompanied by severe abdominal pains, caused by the movements of the "Mali" within the man. The fact of its entrance is always known, as the man suddenly becomes big and strong, efficient as a fighter, and lucky in his quest for game. 775 [753]

"The pessimist sees a difficulty in every opportunity, the Christian should see an opportunity in every difficulty."

Dr. S. M. Zwemer.

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

Spiritual Entities and Creation

Mali and Birrimbirr

[774] Man is believed to possess two spiritual entities, the "Mali,"
●775 or lesser spirit, and the "Birrimbirr," or spirit proper. When a person dies, the Mali for a time inhabits the accustomed haunts of the deceased, and then returns to the spirit centre of the
[778] particular horde. Every one of these spirit centres includes a pool or spring of water, generally with trees and shrubs surrounding it, and the Mali is believed to enter either into the water or into one of the trees growing beside it. If one of these trees should be destroyed, it is believed that disaster will follow, for the destruction of the tree is regarded as equivalent to the destruction of the one whose Mali resides within it.

/ 775 These Mali, or spirits, are believed to be reborn in successive
787 generations of the people. The Mali comes to a man in a dream and says to him, "I want my mother." "Where shall I find my mother?" The man, still in the dream, replies, "Your mother is there." and directs it to his wife. The Mali enters the woman, and later on is reborn into the life of the tribe. Always, when a man so dreams, he passes through some peculiar experience, the significance of which is not realised until afterwards.

For example, a man known to me was one day looking for food along the beach when he saw a fish of a rare, deep-sea variety floating in a most unusual way. This fish he captured and took back to the camp, where he recounted to his companions the circumstances under which he had found it. Other men present refused to partake of it, professing that they were not hungry. This man himself did, and then lay down and slept. While he slept he dreamed that a child spirit came to him in the manner indicated, but he did not associate the two facts until later, when he realised that his wife was to give birth to a child. He was then told by the other men who had been present on the previous occasion that they had refused to eat the fish because they knew

5: Webb M-5 (ca. 1930) 1934
OI17 Murngin OI17

775 it was not an ordinary fish, but was being used by the child spirit
787 as a means of approaching its prospective father.

774 The Mali is shared by man with the whole of the lesser creation. Every living creature, every tree, the very ground itself has its Mali. There can be no existence apart from this spiritual quality.

775 After death the Birrimbirr, or spirit proper, is believed to pass on to Buralkor, the spirit world, which is believed to exist on this world plane away beyond the sun-rising. In this world there are two regions, one good, the other bad, but the spirit's ultimate destination is in no sense determined on ethical grounds. Reaching Buralkor, the spirit once again becomes clothed in physical form, and life goes on as it is lived here.

Creation

773 In the dim dawn days of the world, previous to the existence
776 of men and women as they are found to-day, the world was peopled by a race of semi-human, semi-animal creatures, who were intimately concerned with the origin of the social and ceremonial life of the people. Some of the descendants of these creatures developed into purely animal forms, and others into humans, and many of the "bungals," or open ceremonies, of the people consist of a dramatic recounting of their doings. Behind these there existed certain demi-gods, who were the agents of creation and the ancestors of the present tribal groups. From them the various ceremonial totems were received, and by them the social organisation was established.

Back of these again is the hazy conception of a great spirit known as "Wungarr," by whom the actual agents of creation are believed to have been commissioned and sent forth. The term "Wungarr" is also applied to the dream days of pre-history. By far the most important of these beliefs are those which centre round "Kaitchalan," who is conceived of as a great serpent inhabiting a pool in the upper reaches of the Woolen River. This great creature is believed to have devoured two women who were the most important of the agents of creation, so usurping their powers, and making himself the originator of tribal organisation, social laws and customs, and ceremonial life.

776 Although regarded as in a special sense the ancestor of a certain totemic group of hordes, the power and influence of Kaitchalan are recognised and accepted by all divisions of the tribe.

6: Berndt E-5 (1946-1947) 1951
O117 Murngin O117

culture-heroine in mythology; and all the more so, as no such distinctively creative powers were ascribed to females in the myths of any other region then studied, such as the Kimberley Division of Western Australia, the Great Victoria Desert, North Queensland, nor South-East Australia. In the north-west and north-east of the continent, the important creative culture-heroes are males and many of them were at times in animal form. In the South-East not only was the male aspect dominant, but there was only one great hero, for each tribe or region, named here Bundjil, there Nurunderi, or Baiami or Gulambra or Goin and so on.*

In 1939 my friend, Mr. W. E. Harney, who had spent many years in and around Arnhem Land, and has a greater and sounder knowledge of Aboriginal custom, belief and ritual than any other layman sent me some notes in which much prominence was given to the "Old Woman," Kunapipi, both in doctrines and in ritual. After discussing the material with him, I was satisfied that in the Roper, Macarthur and Victoria River areas, a very vivid cult of the "mother-goddess" type was functioning. Her name varied, being Kunapipi, Mumuna, Kliarin-Kliari, and so on, but she was usually referred to as the "Old Woman" or the "Mother". She was the source of life in man and nature, both in the Dreamtime or creative past and now. In this activity she was associated with a great serpent, usually the Rainbow serpent, who "made the road" into the womb for the pre-existent spirits to be incarnated and reincarnated. She was also the very earth itself, that from which living things came and on which they depended for sustenance. This doctrine was expressed in the Kunapipi ritual. In it her womb was represented, by a trench into which the initiands were put, and from which they were reborn. In addition, the bullroarer, also representing her womb, when swung at the ritual became the sojourning symbol of each initiand's ritual or "wood" spirit. After the ceremony, when the Yermalindji, the symbol of the great snake, was burnt in the earth-womb, the bullroarer was buried there also. Thus, the lad's ritual "shade" remained in Kunapipi, and did so until the disintegration of the symbol, when

* I can speak from personal field work for all these regions except the north-east. See also articles in *Oceania*, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 46-62, R. Piddington, "Karadjeri Initiation", Vol. VI, No. 1, pp. 66-93, Ursula H. McConnel, "Myths of the Wikmunkan and Wiknatara Tribes"; *Ibid.*, Vol. VI, No. 4, pp. 452-477, Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 69-105, "Totemic Hero Cults in the Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland"; Vol. IX, No. 4, pp. 382-404, A. Capell, "Mythology in Northern Kimberley", Vol. XIII, No. 3, pp. 255-260, and Vol. XIV, No. 1, pp. 31-53; "A Preliminary Report of Field Work in the Ooldea Region, Western South Australia", by R. and C. Berndt, *Oceania Bound Reprint*, Sydney, 1945.
Also D. F. Thomson, "The Hero Cult, Initiation and Totemism on Cape York", *Journal, Royal Anthropological Institute*, Vol. LXIII, pp. 453-538; and "Notes on a Hero Cult from the Gulf of Carpentaria, North Queensland", *op. cit.* Vol. LXIV, pp. 217-236. A. W. Howitt, *Native Tribes of South-East Australia*, pp. 475-508.

796 [175] it went to his Dreaming or spirit home to wait for the return of the animating spirit after the death and final burial of the individual.

Further, because of the original life-giving power of the "Mother", [789] the ritual which included many dances referring to natural species, was believed to ensure the normal cycle of the seasons. This, however, did not occur directly as though the effect of increase rites, for the ritual was not regarded as such; but just as, and while, men per- [774] formed their ritual in the "Mother Place" to ensure their own births and rebirths, so the "shades" of natural species performed their own increase rites in the spirit-world.

[777] The details on which this brief analysis was based suggested that the Kunapipi ritual as described by Professor Warner as part of the Wawilak cycle and as having come from the south through the Rainbarngo (Rembaranga) tribe (p. 452), was a most important cultural element in Arnhem Land, the "pure" form of which must be sought along the line of the "southern" rivers such as the Roper, Katherine and Victoria.

177 In 1946, I worked for a short period amongst the tribes on the Roper and Katherine and also visited north-east Arnhem Land, and 773 in 1947 and 1948 worked amongst the Mangarai and Alawa on the 796 Roper, and the Djauan and southern Rembaranga in southern [114] Arnhem Land. While at Yirrkalla near Cape Arnhem in the north-east corner of the region I saw the ceremonial ground with the Nanggoru and Kanala where a Kunapipi ritual had been held some weeks earlier, and obtained information which showed that it had there coalesced with the Wauwalak (or Wawilak) myth, the very "hut", in which the two sisters and the baby were swallowed by *Muit* (Yurlunggur or Julunggul) the snake, being an important feature in the ritual. Moreover, the tradition, as given to me, was that Moit, that is the Wauwalak ritual, spreading south was met somewhere about the Rose River –Nungubuyu tribal country –by the Kunapipi ritual. For the people there, being afraid of his swallowing habits, killed him, and made their own *mumuna*, Mother Dreaming. The result is the present Kunapipi, with the Yermalindji—the Mother's yam stick, and at the same time the Rainbow Snake's symbol—and the Anggoru, the Mother's earth womb.

[114] It was quite clear then that by 1946 the Kunapipi ritual had reached Arnhem Bay, and had done so since early 1929, for Professor Warner wrote (p. 452) that it was not found in any of the clans around Arnhem and Buckingham Bays, or on the islands of the north-east though large numbers of the men from these districts went south to take part in ritual with the clans of the same general linguistic group who did possess it. Further, I was told in 1946 at Elcho Island that a local man, Kumu, had brought the Kunapipi in about 1929 to Elcho and other islands from Caledon Bay where he saw it.

sexual intercourse with the obvious representatives of the "Mother" enable her to fulfil her important function.

Thus, here as in the Ancient East, ritual sex-intercourse is a sacramental act in the cult of the "Great Mother", on which her potency and the survival of man and nature depend. In both regions we are in the presence of a "Mystery Religion". The precious guarded secret is only revealed to the initiated, the twice born, and that secret, that "mystery", is the continuity of life. Life, however, is no mere visible or external phenomenon. In all its forms it has a spiritual counterpart, its "shade". The Cult Mother is more than the Big Woman of the mythological period; she is eternal in the earth, and present and active in her "shade" form in every Kunapipi. The Great Snake, too, Muit or Yermalindji, is present in his symbols at the ceremony, teaching the "reborn" through the traditional words and ritual behaviour of the elders, speaking through them even as the prophet and teacher is the voice of his God. The ritual or "wood" shade, the spirit double of the initiand enters the bullroarer symbol of the Mother and with it remains in her "earth womb" until it goes to the spirit home. While the actors perform their rites to ensure the birth and rebirth of mankind and the "increase" of the Great Mother and the Great Snake as manifested in the rains and the consequent fertility of the earth, the spirit-womb of the Mother is made potent; in addition, as they represent in mime the behaviour of animals, reptiles, birds and insects, the "shades" of these creatures perform the increase ceremonies of their own kind in their own ritual places in the spirit-sphere. Finally, the women who have co-operated in the Kunapipi with their "outside" calls, responses, songs and dance (like the Bundami or Awalambi), and who then take part in the ritual intercourse with men from the Mother Place, become bearers of the latters' ritual or Kunapipi "shades"; at least, such is the doctrine in the Roper River region.

So life is assured to man and nature for it is eternal in the spirit world, in the Great Mother who brings forth and whose impregnating symbol is the Great Snake, the iridescent rainbow which never fails to join the sky to the earth.

Such is the appeal of the cult. Its function in the social and economic life of a food-gathering people in a tropical environment can be studied, and indeed is obvious and logical. A most valuable attempt to analyse the North-East Arnhem Land cults from this point of view has already been made by Professor W. L. Warner in *A Black Civilization*. But why should such a Fertility Goddess cult arise in Arnhem Land and the Victoria River region, and not also in the northern part of the Kimberley Division or in Cape York Peninsula, where the tropical seasons and conditions of living for a parasitic food-gathering people are similar? The answer probably lies in the differences in external contacts. Here it is sufficient to say

7: Berndt E-5 (1946-1950) 1952
OI17 Murngin OI17

Chapter Two

THE DJANGGAWUL MYTH[1]

713 In the beginning there were land and sky, animals and birds, foliage and trees. There was sea, too, in the waters of which were fish and other creatures; and upon the land were beings of totemic origin. All these things were there, as they had always been; but man, as we know him to-day, was not among them.

715 Far out to sea, out of sight of the Arnhem Land mainland, was an island known as Bralgu (Bu'ralgu), the land of the Eternal Beings, which later became the home of the *dua* moiety dead. It lay to the south-east of Port Bradshaw, somewhere beyond Groote Eylandt.

It was here, at Bralgu, that the Djanggawul were living. They are said to have come from a big ceremony or meeting, in an unknown land far beyond the isle of Bralgu. On their arrival there they held another large ceremony, much larger than the contemporary *dua nara*, and used all their sacred objects. At that time they possessed a great many emblems, but only a few of these could be brought in the bark canoe to the Australian mainland.

They did not, however, spend very long at Bralgu, for it was only a 'half-way' resting place on the journey they were attempting.

713 831 There were three of them: Djanggawul himself, his elder Sister, Bildjiwuraroiju, and his younger Sister, Miralaidj. With them, too, was another man, named Bralbral. The Two Sisters and their Brother, however, were nearly always known as the Djanggawul. Djanggawul himself had an elongated penis, and each of the Two Sisters had a long clitoris; these were so long that they dragged

[1] The Yirrkalla version: this varies in certain points from the Milingimbi version, which will be presented later. *Vide Daughters of the Sun* (for publication).

14: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1961 O117 Murngin O117

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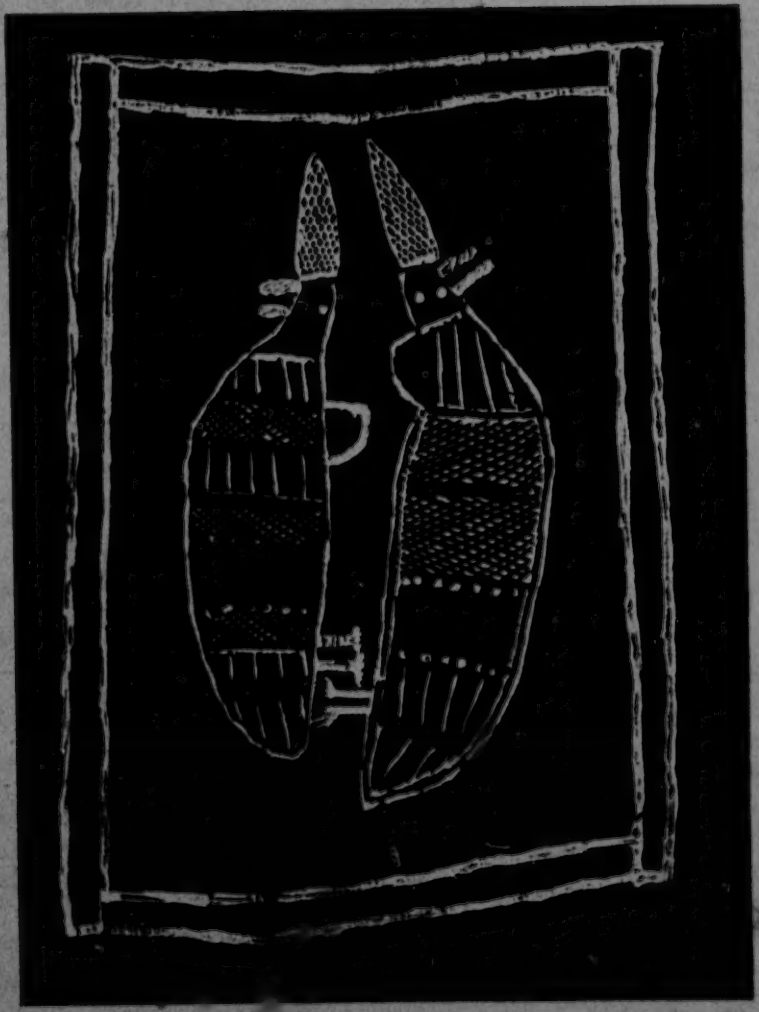

THE TWO 'MARRNGIT' OF MEDICINEMAN WATITYA, DRAWN BY HIMSELF

Left, the spirit familiar Barrakumwul, right, Kunjdringa. The white, cross-hatched areas on the heads of the figures represent hair, the lateral projections [illegible] *ears, and the two small circles on the neck region eyes; the cross-hatching on the bodies represents body hair (downwar, as distinct from marra, the hair of the head). Watitya said: that each marrngit has a stone (kunda) embedded in its sternum (kunmu), which provides its driving force, and that the power of the stone is distinct from its marr, spiritual power; that the stone is 'like the wing of a bird' (nakun bimbar warrakun); that they represent the souls, i.e. half spirit, like a ghost, like the ghost from a dead person; and, in explanation of their grey shadow or shade, 'half birimbir, nakun* [illegible] *ar. 'a man not go on foot' (yakka dirungo djalkiirri marrk).*

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they also possess rituals and myths in common, and in many cases, obvious dialects of one language.

Each of these groups is a patrilineal clan, the members (apart from the wives of the men), being all related in the male line; a social group consists of a man and his brothers and sisters, his children, his son's children, his brother's children and such like. Members of such a clan must never marry one another, but only members of other clans, according to the kinship rules. This rule is called local exogamy. The members of the local clan, together with their wives who have come to live with them (as is the custom), are called a horde.

The most important feature of the local clan is the link which binds its members to one or more sacred totemic waterholes (or wells) in the clan country. The well was formed by the cult totemic hero and ancestor of the clan. In it have sojourned from the great ancestral time the spirits of all those whose earthly course is run, that is, the souls of the dead. Also associated with the well are the clan's totemic emblems and ceremonies. One important function of the latter is the maintenance of the regular order of the dry and wet seasons, and the link with the creative epoch of the totem. Incidentally the souls of the dead may take up their abode, not only in the well, but also in the totemic emblems, and are believed to be present at the great totemic ceremonies. In addition they are called upon to do their part in some rites, especially in connexion with burial. For example, in Chapter 14, Mr Chaseling refers to a deceased child's grandfather chanting a prayer to his own dead brother (that is, the child's 'tribal' grandfather), to come and take the child back to Burralkor, the Island of the Dead. But though a deceased person's spirit goes to this island, it returns to the totemic well in his clan's country. This may seem contradictory to us, but just as space and time were no obstacle to the great ancestresses who came from the island,

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so it is with man's spirit. Moreover, according to native psychology, a man has two souls, and according to some beliefs, it is a man's bush or trickster spirit which goes to the Island of the Dead. But however that be, the more important of these two spirits of the dead does sojourn in the totemic well, and to make sure that the spirit arrives there, signs are made by pointing and singing to the grandfather to come for him. As one informant told Dr Warner, who studied the subject intensively, 'if we didn't sing, he might go bad because evil ghosts might catch him and take him out in the jungle country where they live. It is better that his old grandfather and his ancestors come and get him and take him straight to his clan well where his totem came from.'

Religion

Readers of Mr Chaseling's book will be impressed by the important part played by religion in the life of the Aborigines. Mythology and ritual, totemism and beliefs regarding the spirit of man, the Great Creator Spirit who is revealed in the Rainbow Serpent, and the 'mother goddess', are all part of this religious life. The ritual is the prescribed acting of the great myths by fully initiated men; the mythology provides the sanction and pattern for the rites and for present-day behaviour. The emphasis on the Creator Spirit (associated with the sky) and a kind of 'earth-mother' distinguished Arnhem Land from Central Australian mythology, though interest in the sky-world and a belief that it is the source of life-giving powers (especially through the Rainbow Serpent and the medicine-men), were widespread in Australia. Mr Chaseling's Chapter 17 shows how the natives of his region are fascinated by the sky-world and in their mythology reveal a desire to go to it.

Further details of north-east Arnhem Land myth and ritual are given in W. L. Warner's *A Black Civilization*. He also discusses fully the totemism of the region. A general

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conclusion that in north-east Arnhem Land, the natives really did know the physiological facts, but were not interested in them; they were only interested in 'spiritual conception', which established a person's place in the social and religious structure of the tribe. But whatever be the degree of knowledge or ignorance regarding the physiological facts, there is no doubt that the accepted spiritual doctrine is one of pre-existence. The unborn spirits sojourn at the totemic well waiting to be incarnated, or reincarnated; to that centre they will return after death; and without the entry of the pre-existent spirit child into the womb, there could be no conception.

Everyday Matters

Mr Chaseling is not concerned with discussing complex social and religious problems. His aim is to help us know the Aboriginal as he is. To this end he provides much information regarding interesting everyday affairs. There is no smoke-signal code in this region, and message sticks are simply aids to memory. The Aborigines like having visitors and are anxious to keep them. Like the rest of us, they are subject to flattery, and they use a highly developed form of praise in asking for favours. The status of the women is low, but some affection is shown between spouses; moreover, women do exercise an important influence on affairs; for they live longer on the average than the man (they are not killed in 'wars'), and as a result accumulate a greater knowledge of the everyday myths and legends and of the clan's enemies and friends. There are about three females to each male, another consequence of 'warfare', and connected with this is the fact that usually a man has three wives; but there are a few cases of men with up to twelve wives.

These and many like facts are recorded in the pages which follow, pages which will do much to help readers appreciate the Aborigines of north-east Arnhem Land as human beings,

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and everything connected with it, including fish, turtle, and other food carried in it, were tabu to women and children. It appeared that two days previously the horde had migrated from the south and had brought a skeleton in the canoe, thereby rendering it tabu to women and children. It was another case of mumbakuta.

Sons and sons-in-law of the deceased person brought the fish ashore and ate them around a totemic well scooped in the sand. The leavings were carefully buried in the 'well' and the customary fire lit over them. The camp then went to the canoe on the beach, lit a fire on the sand, and taking leafy branches held them in the smoke and switched them over the canoe to hunt off the ghost of the dead man. Once the skeleton's influence on the canoe was removed, it was safe to travel in, and food could be eaten from it.

Skeletons are customarily carried in bark parcels and exert far-reaching influences, and 'mali', or ghosts, accompanying such bones must be placated. In an exchange I made with Yama for his father's bones (which I wanted to send to the Sydney Museum), I bartered several items for the complete skeleton in its bark cylinder with his horde's totemic symbols painted on the outside. Unknown to me, there were two powerful influences in the bark parcel, one in the bones and the other in the totemic symbols on the bark itself; for such bones laid a tabu on all they touched, just as they would have done if carried in a canoe, and the bark cylinder, by having a totemic sign painted on it, was sacred. Among the items I had exchanged for the skeleton was an axe, so it was agreed that for ceremonial purposes, this should absorb the tabu from the bones and also from the bark cylinder. Thereafter only the nearest relatives could touch it. To remove the skeleton tabu from the axe, Yama cut open a tree containing a bee's nest. Because of the tabu, only fully initiated men of the horde could eat it; but after the meal, the axe was painted to make it

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safe for everyone to use. But the influence of the totem on the cylinder still remained in the axe, and it could therefore be used only by near relatives. To overcome this, Yama cut a canoe, thereby transferring the totemic influences to it. The dug-out was 'de-ghosted' in much the same way as if it had carried the actual bones; fish caught from it were ceremonially eaten, and it was switched with smoking twigs to drive off the tabu.

'Ghostly' help is freely sought by hunters to assist them in their search for food. It is generally accepted that if the ghost, or mali, of a dead man is harnessed it will assist in the hunt by rounding up fish, birds, or animals. A ghost dims the eyes of the game so they cannot see clearly, blocks their ears so they cannot hear the hunter, and plays such havoc with their noses that he is unrecognizable.

To obtain the assistance of such a ghost, a hunter must carry a 'maiwola' or small piece of bone, hair, skin, or blood from the corpse. Small bones, hair, or other parts of a body, may be had for the asking when a corpse is being dismembered in any normal burial ceremony, and these 'hunting-charms' are wrapped in bark and hung round the neck. The ghost, or mali, lurks near its skeleton and, as in the instance of a skeleton carried in a canoe, exerts influence over it and all that it touches. But when a hunter carries a piece of the body as a charm, he is able to control the ghost so that it does his bidding, and when he is hunting the ghost follows the charm. If it happens that several men have obtained charms from the same corpse, and in different parts of the country go hunting at the same time, the ghost will serve one and then hurry off to help another. This explains why charms are not always effective, for if a hunter catches nothing, that is because the ghost is otherwise engaged, or is away lurking by the main part of its skeleton, which is wrapped in bark and carried by a tribal mother.

Any strange event can be readily explained by attributing

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it to invisible wandering ghosts. They haunt old scenes after death, and the signs of their whereabouts are easily recognized from their mischievous habits. Burramurra was our interpreter and spent a lot of time with us, and one day, when he went 'walk-about', a ghost hid his dinner. He had found a nest of turtle eggs and covered them with sand whilst he went for oysters; on his return it seemed that some of the eggs had disappeared, and when he had searched in vain for Yulengor footprints he naturally concluded that some mali had been at work. Two weeks later he heard that a relative had died, and thereupon concluded that the mali of the dead relative had taken the eggs to show that he was a spirit and no longer in the flesh.

Jirring was the best-built and most attractive warrior I have ever seen. He was tall and powerful, yet he burst into my camp one night and agitatedly stammered: 'Ngarakala gurapan bureiala, bukorjulni'—in other words: 'Please give me a lantern.' When I asked him why he wanted it, he said that a mali had run over his chest and wakened him, and he was convinced that it was the ghost of his father, who was away visiting in a distant horde. I had seen his father only a few days previously, so I told him that he must have been dreaming, but he was morbidly confident that his father had been killed and that his spirit had returned with the news. Nor could Jirring be convinced otherwise, until his father returned to camp and he both saw and touched him.

On another occasion, on our way back to Yirrkala after midnight, several men and I were filing along a bush track and saw fires on a hillside. I imagined they were the smouldering remains of recent bush-fires, but no such simple explanation occurred to the nomads, who immediately lowered their voices and questioningly murmured to each other: 'Mali? Mali?' On arrival at the station we saw that something was amiss, for the whole camp was wailing and singing. We were told that a raid had been made over one

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hundred miles away, and it was thought that two Yirrkala men had been killed. The men who were with me immediately supported the tidings with the evidence of the fires in the bush, that had obviously been lit by the mali of the dead men, who had travelled the hundred miles to inform their friends.

Unexpected and distant smoke is at times considered to come from mali camp-fires. Without consciously contradicting the statement that mali are spirits, Yulengor complacently attribute unrecognizable footprints and other physical functions to them. An unknown canoe carried in on the tide or found on an island is accepted as having been used by mali when hunting or fishing.

Women have been assigned a very inferior place in aboriginal society, and it almost seems that they attend some ceremonies to focus attention on the men. But at least one ceremony is carried out entirely by women, at the coming of a first menstrual period.

A young wife, on recognizing the menarche, informs her mother, who then forbids her to leave her windbreak. Food and water are brought to her, and most likely she will curl up in her 'nganmurra', or cone-shaped mat, till she recovers. She is painted with two bands of clay below the shoulders, and red, yellow, and white vertical lines are made between these bands. Whenever menstruation recurs, women smear themselves with ochre and painstakingly abstain from eating men's food. Dugong, turtle, fish, and birds are regarded as men's food, and men are expected to spear them; women content themselves with collecting yams, roots, and shellfish. With undisguised chagrin, a wife in this temporary quarantine will sit with her husband and his wives round the camp-fire, painted red and with her back turned, and will nibble a yam or shellfish whilst the family consume turtle, kangaroo, or fish.

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211 [212] Nomads have not acquired the art of recording their thoughts, but they make use of the well-known 'letter-stick', and those I have received have been handed over with a certain breathlessness, as if they were charmed missives. Their use is intended to lend an importance to a message, which however cannot be deciphered by the recipient. All he sees on the flat oblong chip of wood is a series of carved lines, circles, and crosses, probably partly covered by a coat of red ochre. After an appropriate examination of the stick the bearer is invariably called on to decode the message. He obligingly takes it, and pointing to one mark says that it represents the writer, that another is for his brother, that several strokes refer to a number of days or lunar months, and that a wide cut is a request for a canoe or an indication of the strength of a raiding party. Marks on letter-sticks merely remind the bearer of points in the message he is conveying. The last line on all letter-sticks sent to me invariably ended with the request: 'Please send me some tobacco.'

[648] Before leaving Darwin on the first trip to east Arnhem Land, I visited three brothers who were serving sentences for having murdered Japanese fishermen in Caledon Bay. They were glum and disinterested till I told them where I was going, and they then asked me to take a letter-stick to their father. Weeks later I delivered this message on an isolated beach near Caledon Bay, and that night the camp sang and wailed over memories revived by the letter-stick.

202 372 Probably the most popular of all delusions concerning the nomad is that he sends messages by means of smoke. I am not aware that any aboriginal has ever sent any coded signal by smoke; yet, on the other hand, they will interpret smoke-fire as indicating the presence of visitors and will light fires for an easily understood purpose, or in accordance with a pre-arranged plan. Fires that break out unexpectedly and perhaps are due to smouldering logs bursting [775]

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into flame long after a bush-fire has passed, are in all seriousness attributed to mischievous spirits. All fires thus have some meaning, and though their significance may be wrongly interpreted, they do play an important part in elementary signalling.

A family brought the news to Yirrkala that a woman and her child were dangerously ill near Port Bradshaw, and as Mataman was going that way a few days later, he promised to let the local people know about the patients by smoke-fires. If they were dead he was to light a smoke-fire, and if they had recovered he was to do nothing. When great clouds of smoke billowed over the hills the following day, it was assumed that the woman was dead, and the usual wailing and mourning songs were sung. However, a few days later the woman and her child walked into Yirrkala and explained that Mataman had been hunting kangaroos and had lit a fire to smoke them out.

Friendly visitors invariably light fires to give warning of their approach; otherwise they might be mistaken for enemies, and speared. In any case they do not know where their hosts are hunting, and they light fires to invite an answer from the camp they intend visiting. Smoke is also sent up as a warning signal when anything untoward happens, and a passing lugger is enough to start a line of fires. As each party of hunters sees the boat, they light fires to warn their friends.

The rapidity with which detailed messages are passed from one camp to another has led to the assumption that information has been sent by secret smoke-signals. But the message-carriers are human. I have known men and women to travel long distances by night and, by taking short cuts, to be on the beach the following morning to meet the lugger after we had sailed some sixty miles overnight.

A government officer was due to arrive at the station by air, and as the Yulengor had not previously seen an aeroplane

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754 several women and children were dead; other sufferers were retching, and rolling on the beach in agony.

When an epidemic of whooping cough from Darwin swept eastwards through Arnhem Land and caused many deaths, [164] a horde on the Crocodile Islands explained that an enemy [776] had released the curse from a tree containing the spirit of the common cough. By stripping the bark from the tree he uncovered the evil spirit and sent it to the camps of his enemies to afflict them. On the other hand he could have broken up the tree, burnt it, and sent the smoke to blow over them.

754 Old Manimba, lame and half-blind, was familiar with 753 magical arts and an acknowledged rain-maker. He also 789 claimed to have control over mosquitoes and boils. Spirits 885 of both plagues inhabit the pandanus palm, and when these [776] prickly fronds drop off in the wet season the mosquito and boil spirits are released to swarm over the land. Manimba usually gets what he wants by threatening to send some sort of plague. To rouse unseasonal mosquitoes he pulls a green pandanus frond and instructs its mosquito-spirit to swarm into the country of his enemies, and it is done. He can call up boils by making a fire under the palm and directing the smoke to blow over and inflict certain camps.

754 Death in any but the very young or old is attributed to evil 761 magic and the first consideration is to fix the blame, for 787 someone must die for it. When a man is killed his lesser [775] spirit follows the killer. Marrngeit, or benevolent witch-[756] doctors, claim to be able to see these enslaved ghosts, and they are called on for an opinion. They sometimes make startling revelations to the relatives, though not always without serving their own ends. I remember one marrngeit acted on his own initiative, and asked the relatives: 'Do you know why your brother died?' And when interest and suspicion were fully aroused, he continued, 'I have seen his "mali". It is following Jimunboi, and he must

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Burial Rites and Cannibalism

DEATH and burial customs are much the same from one end of Arnhem Land to the other. Bodies are artistically painted and decorated before they are buried or exposed on platforms or in trees. Later the bones are collected and hoarded by relatives till they feel disposed to deposit them in decorated burial posts. In one district bones are removed from the body and parts of the flesh are eaten in an effort to form a link with the dead. This ceremonial cannibalism is confined to three or four hordes, but all Arnhem Land nomads attempt to communicate with their dead and call on them for assistance.

Mau's young son slipped from an overhanging tree, and in falling into the water struck his head on a canoe. No one saw the accident and he was not missed till his body drifted downstream to the beach. Two youths carried the corpse to the camp, but by coming into contact with it they had attracted its spirit or 'mali', which lodged in their skin. Before they dared to eat any food they must needs free themselves from the ghost by smearing red-ochre on their arms.

That night the entire camp of several inter-related hordes combined in a ceremony conducted by the child's grandfather. Alternately he wailed and sang a prayer to the spirit of his dead brother, the child's tribal grandfather, asking him to come and take the young spirit to the spirit world of 'Buralkor'. The camp set about preventing the spirit or mali from haunting them, and drove it from the camp by switching their bodies with heated leafy twigs.

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sticks were pulled out and thrown on the heap to deter inquisitive dingoes. 765

Meantime the grandfather sang songs appropriate to the departing spirit, the most important being the plover song. A plover is a spirit from Buralkor disguised with feathers so that mortals may see it, and its purpose is to guide human spirits on their way to the spirit world. Native-companions, geese, jungle fowls, and cockatoos are similarly revered by the Yiritja moiety, except that they have no qualms about eating them. Moreover, these are genuine birds and not visible spirits like the plover. Their importance lies in their supernatural ability to see spirits and to assist them. 765 533 825 [075]

As the grandfather sang the bird-songs, his sons accompanied him with clap-sticks and women danced and made the bird-signs. For the plover they held their hands in front of their shoulders with the fingers half clenched like talons; this gesture is also used ordinarily in their sign-language to indicate death, a corpse, or wandering ghost. Geese were introduced by imitating their cries and by holding short sticks between the hands for bird-perches. Long-winged native-companions could not be mistaken when the dancers extended their arms and flapped them. 765 535 201 825

At the end of the ceremony a tribal-mother carried the bones to her camp and deposited them in the fork of a tree; in bush-camps such parcels can be seen in trees or in forked sticks. Skulls are of more importance and are painted and hoarded for as long as ten years. 765

It is usual to expose infants and to bury older children and adults, though no particular significance is attached to either method and both are preliminaries to the collecting of the skeleton. A corpse is buried in a shallow grave face downwards to facilitate the removal of the bones by lifting the backbone to which the greater part of the skeleton is attached. Bones may be collected in four or five days, a week or several months after burial, depending on the regard the [066] [064]

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horde had for the deceased. In decimated hordes, and in the case of aged and unwanted wives, I have known bodies to be left in the ground and no attempt made to remove them.

Until bones have been collected and a mother is 'purified' she remains smeared with red-ochre and leads an inactive life. Relatives feed her and carry water from the well so that she will not desecrate it, for her child's ghost hovers near her and may attach itself to anything she handles. Similarly the relative who dismembers the body is tabu because of the ghost lodging in his skin, and he also is barred from waterholes and from feeding himself and becomes dependent on the hospitality of the family of the corpse. They are expected to treat him well even to the extent of making presents in return for the favour he has done them in attending to the corpse and running the risk of absorbing the ghost. Consequently there is no difficulty in getting 'grandsons' to run these risks, and the father not infrequently declines several offers and even limits the number of morticians to two or three.

This final purification ceremony is similar to the 'mumbakuta' described in Chapter 5. Food is deposited in a totemic well conveniently scooped in the sand, and from this a ceremonial meal is eaten by the victims of the tabu and by certain near relatives. Waste food is piled into the well and burnt, to prevent dingoes disturbing it, and the tabu is finally lifted and the ghost removed when the relatives heat leafy twigs in a fire and switch their bodies. Alternatively, water or sand may be poured over the 'unclean' as they stand in the totemic well and smear themselves with red-ochre.

All deaths are regarded with a certain amount of suspicion, but the death of an active warrior is always attributed to sorcery. In such case the body is left in the ground for a very short time before the bones are collected. Smaller ones are

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given to relatives, and by accepting them they pledge themselves to avenge the death of their kinsman. Bones are also worn as hunting-charms; the ghost follows the bone and guides the wearer to good hunting. Skeletons carried in canoes or sheltered in huts transfer their ghost to anything they touch, and rarely are they allowed to come into contact with private property.

Tabus are lifted by switching away the ghost with smoking twigs. This common 'muntja' ceremony is performed whenever news of a death reaches a camp, perhaps months after it has occurred, otherwise the roaming, mischievous ghost might haunt them indefinitely. Men are most particular in taking part in the ghost-laying practices, otherwise the ghost would trail them when hunting, and as animals can see these spirits it would not be possible to stalk and spear game.

An accepted etiquette is observed in breaking news of death. With an air of mystery the messenger imparts his information to two or three of the older men, and often it is ten or twelve hours before they divulge the news in open camp. I saw a man bring such news and tell it by signs to a few old men who agreed to keep the secret till they arranged the ghost-placating ceremony, and no one heard about it till the coterie commenced to sing for the unmistakable 'muntja'. Performers then derived great satisfaction from the furore; the rest of the camp ran to inquire about the death and to join in the laying of the ghost.

Dead nomads' names are never repeated, though reference to them can be made by signs or by relationship terms. If the restless ghost heard its old familiar name it would probably lodge in the camp or in the body of the person using it. A nomad with a dead man's name will change it or be referred to under a class-name. A little girl, Milly-milly, had her euphonious name changed to Arrung-giddy-niddy after the death of an older Milly-milly. The child appreciated

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551 the distinction, and when I forgot the new name and used the old one she remained naïvely silent till correctly addressed.

•775 Appropriate names are given to wandering ghosts, though 'mali', 'morquoi' and 'warru' are the most comon. Mali and morquoi are also used for reflections in water or in a [192] mirror, and warru is applied to any shade or shadow. Ghosts roam at will, hunting and fishing, gathering yams and cooking them; strange events, unaccountable fires, a falling tree, and unrecognizable footprints can all be attributed to mali. At times a mali deserts a skeleton and hovers round a mother's camp, and should she find that her food has disappeared, she is happy in the belief that her dead child's shadow came to her when hungry.

'Birrimbirr' is the second spirit found in every individual. [774] Birrimbirr come from the spirit world of Buralkor, and at death relatives urge them to return there. Irrespective of the life lived on earth, birrimbirr return to Buralkor, and good and bad spirits live there in hordes as they do on earth.

[776] Buralkor lies beyond the rising sun and is the home of the [821] Great Spirit who sent out the first creative Ancestresses. The sun comes from the spirit land and goes back again each night to suckle her infant. On its flight to Buralkor a spirit first sees a cloud rising from the sea and later it resolves itself into a dense jungle with every leaf holding a sparkling dewdrop. On approaching the trees, the birrimbirr finds an opening, and a plover guides it through the branches to the camp of its horde's spirits, where it is welcomed and it settles down to a happy life of hunting. Birrimbirr are able to see what is taking place on earth, and from time to time they hear earthly relatives calling for help and for them to go and pilot in another spirit.

765 With both mali and birrimbirr safely disposed of, the bones are smeared with red-ochre, and involved totemic symbols

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and after a quick glance at the totem they kept their eyes on the ground. Eventually they were induced to touch the totem, after which the whole party filed back to the main camp for food, and indulged in the usual singing and dancing.

With her journey's end in sight, Numma Moiyuk crossed the Liverpool River and camped behind Boucaut Bay. On a wide plain she made a lagoon and filled it with water-lilies and fish. Her remaining offspring were born beside the lake and she taught them all she knew. These children raised up distinct hordes, but they all camped with the Goddess by the lake. They ingeniously account for a number of their dances and songs, and for certain arts and crafts, which are unknown elsewhere in the west, by saying that they were special gifts from Numma Moiyuk. Thus they effectively forestall any pagan suggestion that such customs may have come from the adjacent, eastern 'foreign' group where, strange to relate, they are in everyday use.

For many years the aged Goddess stayed with the Boucaut Bay hordes, and through her they became mighty warriors and hunters. But they became so dependent on her, that when she died they not only lost a leader but were in danger of a severe reduction in strength and prestige. Finally they decided to retain her strength and skill by absorbing her body; so they cooked and ate her.

To this day the ceremonial practice is continued, and all but the diseased and aged are eaten. In the same way as Numma Moiyuk's spirit returned to the spirit world under the tide-rip at Cape Don, all aboriginal spirits return to Numma Moiyuk; and the singing and wailing accompanying a burial are prayers to the goddess to receive and care for the departed. Numma Moiyuk watches over the affairs of men and sends out young spirits to populate the land. Sexual intercourse itself does not result in conception, but is an appeal to the Mother of creation to send a young spirit from

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the spirit world. Numma Moiyuk watches for her opportunity, and when a prospective mother goes for water, she slips the spirit of the child into the pool and the potential parent unwittingly drinks it. The child is later born in the usual way, a week, a month, or possibly several years later, for time is immaterial when spiritual beings operate in the natural world.

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Magic profoundly influences everyday beliefs and habits, and an ordinary nomad, as well as the witch-doctor, may set in operation magical powers.[1]

Prayer is offered to the spirits of the dead, and they are not only called on to receive departing human spirits, but in time of sickness, a man will call on the waterspout to carry his prayer to the spirits of his relatives.[2] A patient may also enter a totemic waterhole inhabited by a great mythical snake, which will effect the faith-cure.[3] Mythical serpents are called on for help, and receive prayers in time of acute danger and distress.

Makarola told me that he had been overtaken by darkness when returning with his family after a day's fishing. A strong wind arose and the canoe was blown out to sea, waves half-filled it, and whilst wives and children baled frantically in the darkness, he toiled to keep the dug-out into the wind. Makarola then remembered his totem and called on it for help. He said that in that instant he saw a 'bright light' which 'filled' his head. By the light he was assured that they would be brought safely to land, and when the wind abated, the family landed in an exhausted condition.

Though awe and fear weigh heavily in aboriginal religion, the nomad's religious outlook and practices are best summed up under the term 'Totemism'. Such totemism links man and nature and goes back to the ancestral creators of Junkgowa, who made the earth and its inhabitants, instituted present-day laws, habits and customs, and defined for all time the nomad's outlook and beliefs. Totemic beliefs and the record of their bestowal are preserved in the Ngara ceremonies, which are linked with the totem centres where the hero-Ancestors performed their mighty deeds. Behind the supernatural Ancestors, and beyond the present world, is the spirit-land of Buralkor, from whence they came.

[1] Chapter 19, 'Black Magic.'
[2] Chapter 10, 'Medicine-Men and Magic.'
[3] *Ibid.*

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Buralkor is also inhabited by the sun and her child, and by departed human spirits and Wangarr.

Wangarr is the eternal, indefinite, impersonal power behind creation and all life. He is impersonal, yet benign. He sent the Junkgowa to the earth, and through their totem centres he is now in touch with men. Being impersonal, there is no suggestion of his being placated, and eventually both the evil and the good go to Buralkor to dwell with him in the spirit-land.

Unusual happenings are glibly attributed to Wangarr, and his name is constantly on the lips of nomads. To Maulin and his horde, the entire headland and the islands off Port Bradshaw had always been a totem centre, for here the ancestral Junkgowa had performed their miracles; the application of the vague 'Wangarr' to any part of the area indicates that it is linked to the spirit-world. Maulin and his sons visited their totem centre near Port Bradshaw shortly after a cyclonic disturbance, and on a reef near an island they saw a new rock that had been thrown up in the storm. No such simple explanation came to their minds, however, for Maulin casually remarked, 'Oh, Wangarr,' and his explanation satisfied everyone. In the course of time a horde from the south wandered in to fraternize and to bring news concerning a raid that had taken place below Blue Mud Bay, in which a woman and her child had been killed. 'Yes,' Maulin nonchalantly remarked, 'we knew something untoward had happened, because we saw a new rock standing on the reef and realized that Wangarr had something to do with it. It must have been put there by the spirits of the woman and her child to show us that they had been killed.'

It is impossible to determine just where lies the line of demarcation between Wangarr and the activities of departed human spirits. Nor is it necessary to make such distinction, for the term Wangarr includes them all, the Great Spirit, creative Junkgowa sent forth by him, the

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power behind totem centres, and human spirits created and received again in Buralkor by him after death.

It soon becomes obvious that to arrive at an understanding of the nomad, and to win his complete confidence, there must be an appreciation of his religion. His religion runs down through his secret life to everyday arts and crafts, which were all given him by the Junkgowa and determines even his methods of food-gathering and cooking. All these things are done in a particular manner, because the Junkgowa so instituted them. In the network of the nomad's life the simplest of activities are linked to his highest beliefs and noblest aspirations. They stand or fall together, and no part of his habits and customs can be tampered with without the risk of doing violence to the entire structure of his life and culture. An effective approach to the nomad can be made only on the basis of religion; that is, by an appreciation of his habits, outlook, and philosophy of life. Be a man trader, adventurer, or missionary, he will find a ready welcome if he is prepared to respect their laws, both common and sacred, which are all interwoven and rest on ancient Junkgowa creation myths.

Several old men were talking together and invited me to join them. One of them said: 'We like those stories of Jesus that you tell us: He is the white man's Junkgowa. Our Junkgowa came from Wangarr and we can see now that, in the same way, Jesus is the white man's Junkgowa.' It was instantly clear that they accepted Jesus as the equal of their Junkgowa—and no more. If such an estimate were accepted it would preclude any development in their outlook, aspiration, and custom. I suggested to these primitive philosophers that many Junkgowa had taught the white man, although they went by the name of 'prophets'. Second, their teachings were incomplete and vague till God the Eternal Spirit, known to aborigines as Wangarr, sent His Son Jesus to complete the revelation. Because of the